

2025 HOLIDAY ISSUE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18



CHRIS GOODEN PHOTO

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Trainer Ron Burke breaks new ground with \$31 million season



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [Bergmanjay](#)

They say records are made to be broken but that's easier said than done. For the sport's leading trainer Ron Burke, there was hardly a possibility his vast stable could match the incredible performance put forth in the 2014 racing season. The Burke brigade elevated their record-setting purse total to more than \$28 million for that year. The number was \$6 million greater than Burke's horses had won during any other year.

"I never thought we would beat that record," said Burke proudly over a 2025 campaign that has seen the stable go over the \$30 million mark for the first time, unheard of 11 years ago but incredible today. "I think the biggest difference this year from the others is the number of stakes races we won."

What separates Burke from any other trainer in the sport is more than a numbers game. It's a logistics game where the stable has evolved as the power has shifted from state to state over time.

"Back in 2014 most of the success happened in Pennsylvania," Burke said. "The overnight money was very strong."

With Burke's base of operations centered at The Meadows, Pennsylvania helped the stable reach the heights in 2014, but almost a dozen years later nothing looks the same other than the incredible results.

"You know I've got all of the same guys that were with me back in 2014 still doing it today," said Burke, obviously proud of the accomplishment. "All the trainers are still with me, and Yannick (Gingras) is still going strong. We've added Chris (Page), Ronnie (Wren Jr.) and Dexter (Dunn), and that's been great."

The stable actually exceeded \$31 million on December 17 and eclipsed the 1,100 win mark (Dec. 16) for the second time in the last three years in the process.

"We made some mistakes. We found out we weren't raising the horses properly and we handed that over to people who knew how to."

-Trainer Ron Burke on his breeding operation

What's fascinating about the Burke stable's trajectory over time is how it has evolved from a barn that primarily raced overnight horses – having its greatest impact on the sport usually with veterans – to now becoming a stable that routinely is at the top in virtually all Sire Stakes races throughout North America, with freshman and sophomores competing at the highest level. It's not an easy transition to make and there are always bumps in the road, but the conversion has shown that Burke and company have figured out the breeding business as well. The success of homebreds in the stable has been growing with each year as Burke has combined his own pacing mares and produced an escalating list of world champions with champions like Loua Dipa and Louprint cut from that mold.

"I give Mark Weaver all of the credit for the breeding operation," said Burke of his longtime partner who has focused on those important decisions and has struck gold along the way, which has to be the envy of some who have plied that trade for decades without producing champions.

"We made some mistakes," said Burke bluntly of the addition of the breeding business. "We found out we weren't raising the horses properly and we handed that over to people who knew how to."



Ron Burke holds the 2025 MGM Yonkers International Trot trophy after his Lexus Kody took the 1 1/4 mile event in September.

Both Louprint and Loua Dipa were sired by Burke's standout racehorse and now the sport's leading sire Sweet Lou. It was not a fait accompli for Sweet Lou in the stallion ranks or even after the first few crops hit the racetrack.

"We always had faith in him," Burke said of Sweet Lou. "He just wasn't getting the right kind of mares and that wasn't giving him a chance." Burke and company found the right kind of mares for Sweet Lou and then others joined in helping to elevate his stature.

It is never a straight line from the training track to the winner's circle and while nearly everything went right this year for Burke, there was a bump in the road. "I wasn't happy with the way Louprint went out," said Burke, referring to the final race of his brilliant career in the Breeders Crown. "He's the best horse I've ever had."

Now retired and starting stallion duty in 2026 in Ohio at Winterwood Farm under the management of Diamond Creek, Louprint's departure from the track left Burke wondering what could've been. "I'm a racing

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10



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guy first," said Burke. "I believe if he came back to race again, he would put up Bulldog Hanover kind of numbers."

While horses come and horses go for Burke, it seems more horses come than go as the stable's supply continues to swell. Burke has adopted a policy that he feels works best for his horses. "With the numbers we have if a horse needs time to rest, we just give it to him and wait for him to come back," Burke said.

The luxury has helped the stable add to its roster. "We've got over 500 horses."

The number seems staggering, but it represents how far Burke has come in the sport and just how well his team of trainers at seven satellite locations works with him on a day-to-day basis.

"The technology has changed a lot," said Burke. "I speak to my trainers every day and they send me videos of the training sessions, so I get to see all of the horses as well."

The luxury of videos may be fine, but Burke will be active this winter with coming 2-year-olds in training in Florida. "I'll spend two or three weeks in Florida, then go to Jersey for a week and then to The Meadows," said Burke, hoping to get a firsthand feel of how his horses are preparing for the coming season.

Giving horses time paid off in the biggest sense this year for Burke with his Horse of the Year contender Lexus Kody. The 7-year-old gelded son of Archangel authored an impressive streak of success through the summer, with the highlights including a victory in the \$1 million MGM Yonkers International Trot and the Maple Leaf Trot during an 11-win campaign that closed out with a powerful victory in the FanDuel. A trotter that needed time to figure out how to race went from a horse that had to race on the front end to one that was manageable and resilient when called upon.

Though Louprint won't return for a 4-year-old season, Burke does have



DEAN GILLETTE

On To Norway won 23 straight races at Hoosier Park in 2025 and will head out on the Grand Circuit for trainer Ron Burke in 2026.

a trotter coming back that he has high hopes for. On To Norway ended his 3-year-old season on a 23-race win streak. The son of Muscle Massive just devoured his Indiana rivals, dominating on every occasion at Hoosier Park.

"I'm really looking forward to see what he can do next year," said Burke. "I've had some pretty good luck with horses coming out of here, like Hannelore Hanover and M-M's Dream."

The implication is clear that the Indiana program has worked well to provide the foundation for some of the sport's best as aged performers.

Like any championship team The Burke Brigade has benefited from solid organization with a dedicated staff that understands and knows how to execute at a high level. It wouldn't be possible if not for a leader with the energy and commitment of Ron Burke.

"Most of us are in our mid-50's and should be slowing down," Burke said. "But there's plenty left to do."

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SIPPINONSEAROC

P,2 1:48.2; 3,1:47.3 (\$1,353,628)

Stud Fee: \$7,500

Standing at Victory Hill Farm

Contact Dr. J Stallion Management



LOUPRINT

P,2 1:48.4; 3,1:46.3 (\$1,763,910)

Stud Fee: \$17,500

Standing at Winterwood Farm

Contact Diamond Creek

Thank you to the above stallions and the rest of our horses for making 2025 a memorable year. Special thanks as always to the 'Burke Brigade' for being the best partners we could have in the sport!

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Mark Weaver and Mike Bruscemi

“The King” tops 2025’s list of retiring Standardbreds



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Giwner X [@harnesseyeguy](#)

The end of each calendar year is a special time for many around the world. For most it is the celebration of a holiday – Christmas, Hanukah or Kwanza – as we soon after gather with family and friends to ring in the New Year. When it comes to our 14-year-old Standardbreds it is time for mixed feelings, for it means the end of their racing career but hopefully the start of retirement or embankment on a new vocation.

There were 106 horses which raced as 14-year-olds in 2025 and there is something special about any horse that can “make it to the end” in terms of their career. From that total are 39 horses which raced into November. The list includes millionaires as well as horses that failed to earn \$25,000 in their careers. The group contains a pacer with a 1:47 2/5 lifetime mark as well as one with 2:00 3/5 lifetime best. It takes all types of horses for tracks across North America to put on a racing program and the retiring bunch of 2025 certainly fits the bill.

While in most years there is some doubt of the lead horse in the retirement class, this year that honor clearly belongs to “The King”. JL Cruze earned that moniker at The Meadowlands a decade ago and retained it even when he perhaps lost a step in his later years.

JL Cruze may’ve started racing as a 2-year-old in 2013 but his career as we know it today didn’t truly commence until late in his second year of racing when the ownership group of Ken Wood, William Dittmar Jr. and Stephen Iaquinta bought the son of Crazed in November 2014 for \$37,000 at the Standardbred Horse Mixed Sale in Harrisburg. A winner of just \$21,347 at the time of purchase, new trainer Eric Ell had no idea that the horse would go on to earn over \$2 million.

“We just went to the sale looking for something for Dover that could race in the non-winners races and work his way up. He fit the bill at the time and we lunged on him,” said Ell. “When I first got him I didn’t like him at all because he couldn’t trot a turn. He needed a bigger racetrack and we had to make a few changes. Every start he got better and better and better.”

JL Cruze truly shined as a 4-year-old at The Meadowlands, winning the Super Bowl, Charles Singer and Shiaway St Pat winter series finals before returning later in the summer to capture the Graduate and Hambletonian Maturity. His 16 wins in 21 starts combined with \$627,456 in earnings and trotting the first sub 1:50 mile (1:49 4/5) in the history of The Meadowlands earned him Dan Patch honors as the top older male trotter in the sport for the year.

“He was so sharp at the time. He was incredible,” said Ell about the remarkable year before reflecting on the good fortune of having JL Cruze in his barn. “It doesn’t happen often and it will never happen again for us. He was the best horse we ever had for sure.”

Although JL Cruze never quite reproduced his incredible 2015 season, he won \$231K the following year and \$364K in 2017. With the exception of 2018 when he only made six starts, he earned over \$100K every year from 2015 to 2024.

For Ell, one of the most remarkable achievements for JL Cruze during his career came in 2017 when he captured the Spirit of Massachusetts at Plainridge Park in late July. A 6-year-old at the time, he developed a twisted intestine and had to undergo surgery at New Bolton but was able to rebound and remain at the top of his game. That procedure wasn’t JL Cruze’s only career obstacle as he also dealt with two high suspensory injuries.

“There was never a time when I didn’t think he would race, but once you put him on the table and have to open them up, usually they don’t come back good from that. It was amazing that he did. It was amazing that he won the Spirit of Massachusetts and that he could compete at that level,” said Ell.

JL Cruze’s last trip to the track came at Dover Downs on November 4. He finished just sixth while still racing in one of the highest classes offered at the Delaware oval. While it wasn’t the end Ell envisioned, it was the right thing for his 14-year-old war horse.



CHRIS TULLY PHOTO

A young JL Cruze winning the 2015 Hambletonian Maturity at The Meadowlands.

“He came out of his last race gimpy in his left front. I injected his ankle and gave him a couple of weeks but he still wasn’t 100 percent. He was so close to the end of the year, I didn’t want to risk him being off up front and pulling something behind and then having to retire lame or hurting. He

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Happy Holidays

From Winbak Farm

Winbak would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who bid on and bought a horse from Winbak Farm in 2025. We appreciate your help in making this another great year and wish you well in 2026!

Congratulations to the connections of successful Winbak graduates! In 2025, Winbak graduates have won **1,873** races and earned **\$20,247,173**.

We would also like to extend a thank you to our breeders. Thank you for your continuous support and we look forward to working with you in 2026!

Winbak will be standing stallions in Canada, Delaware, Maryland, New York & Ohio in 2026. Please stay tuned to www.winbakfarm.com for updates as breeding season approaches.

*Information as of 12/16/25



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probably could've tried to finish up the year; he was still in the Winners Over. My intentions were to end the year with a win but when he didn't come out of the race well and didn't respond to the injection I just retired him a month early," said Ell, who reports that JL Cruze is now retired on co-owner Ken Wood's farm. "He's loving life and is acting very content.

"When you walked him out of the barn into the field you always had to be careful and turn him around the other way. The minute you took the lead shank off he would bolt. He would run and run and buck. He did that the whole 12 years I had him. He can buck all he wants now."

JL Cruze retired with 75 wins in 273 starts. He finished in the top three in just shy of 60 percent of his starts and earned \$2,049,606.

"It was very important," said Ell of the earnings mark. "We were shooting for [two million]. We've had a couple of others make a million but he's the only one to get to two. Coming to the end of his career I didn't know if he was going to make it but he ended up earning almost \$50,000 after that.

"He earned every dime he got and did it the hard way," concluded Ell.

JL Cruze isn't the only millionaire who called it a career in 2025. Cash Me Out (\$1,486,925) and Always At My Place (\$1,330,230) both hung up their halters following long campaigns on the track.

Just an \$11,500 Morrisville yearling purchase, Cash Me Out was a winner from the word go, capturing a leg of the New York Excelsior series in his career debut in 2013 and going on to win north of \$93,000 every year through 2019.

A horse who truly did it the hard way, Cash Me Out rarely competed in rich stakes races and never came close to a win in those appearances. What he did was show up in Opens at many tracks on the East Coast week after week from 2015 to 2024 for owner (and sometimes trainer) Michael Traylor and earn money. Cash Me Out is the epitome of an on-track warrior.

Always At My Place took a bit of a different career path in that he competed at just below the top level for many years and earned the majority of his bankroll from 2015 to 2019 as a member of the Ron Burke barn. His biggest win came in an Invitational at Pocono Downs back in 2015 when he stopped the timer in 1:47 2/5, making him the fastest of this retiring class.

Some horses may tail off toward the end of their careers. That wasn't the case for the Australian-bred Persistent Threat. He led all 14-year-olds with 13 wins (30 starts) this year and had his best earning season (\$49,456)

since 2021. Interestingly, he was claimed back by the Redder family in June of his final year. It was the fourth time in the last few years they've been involved with the horse.

"We've always liked him and we've had different partners on him along the way. At the end my sister bought back into him. She had to sell him when we had to give him a break because she works a regular job and didn't want to pay bills on a horse that wasn't racing. She didn't feel right about buying back in when he was winning every week but when he tailed off she wanted to be in on him at the end of his career," said trainer Peter Redder, who was recalling his on and off involvement

with the horse in 2024 and 2025. "They claimed him off us for \$12,500 and we bought him back for \$4,000. He was in poor form at the time and we knew it was going to take a little bit of time to get him back going."



PHOTO PROVIDED
Pete Redder with Persistent Threat, who won the most 2025 races among 14-year-olds with 13 victories.

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Holiday Wishes from Svanstedt Stable

To our **Owners, Horses, Drivers, and Caretakers –**

thank you all for your trust, your dedication, and your love for the sport and horses.

Together we make all this possible.

May your Christmas be warm, your New Year full of joy, and may every stride in 2026 bring hope, happiness, and new dreams



Season's Greetings

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and safe holiday season and a very prosperous New Year.



Amanda Stephens

New in 2026!

CAPTAIN OPTIMISTIC

p,2, 1:49, 3, 1:48-’25 (\$939,790)

Captaintreacherous - Cinamony

Stud Fee: \$5,000 U.S.

Contact Deo Volente for breeding information



Lisa Photo

PERFECT STING

p,3, 1:48.1 (\$1,861,447)

Always B Miki - Shebestingin

Standing at Deo Volente Farms of NJ

Stud Fee: \$7,500 U.S.



Red Mile

SIX PACK

3, 1:49.1 (\$1,973,661)

Muscle Mass - Pleasing Lady

Standing at Winbak Farm of New York

Stud Fee: \$5,000 U.S.

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Persistent Threat finished out his career on November 20 at Harrah's Hoosier Park with a disappointing sixth-place finish in a \$5,000 claimer. Redder admits that the horse probably should've retired a month sooner but he continued because the meet was about to end and he was still earning some money.

"We would've quit with him in early October if it wasn't for it being the end of his career. So we let him finish out the Hoosier meet," said Redder. "He seems like he likes racing. He does his work every day. When it is time to come in he would prefer to just stay on the track and keep jogging. He tries to stay out on the track and I have to make him come in."

A career earner of \$561,157, Persistent Threat is done racing. As of early December he was set to head to family friend for a relaxing retirement.

"We have a friend and his dad wanted an older horse to have at his place. That way we can keep track of where he is," said Redder. "He doesn't like strangers but he really bonds with the people who take care of him, so I think he'll be a good in that environment."

With over 100 horses nearing the mandatory retirement age there are bound to be some interesting records accumulated by the group and perhaps the most amazing is the one owned by Archetto Hanover. While officially there is no way to know if it is a true record, Archetto Hanover has competed at 26 extended pari-mutuel tracks during his career. Making it difficult to equal is the fact that some of those facilities – Maywood, Balmoral, Pompano and Freehold – don't even exist anymore. And his list of tracks don't even include many fair locations in Maine and beyond.

Originally a \$67,000 yearling purchase at the Lexington Selected Sale in 2012, Archetto Hanover was a stakes winner as a 2-year-old in the Abe Lincoln at Maywood Park. After a couple of successful years for his original ownership group he moved on well over a dozen times over the years before landing at his final home for co-owners Marianna Monaco and Emily Burgess.

"Yogi [Sheridan] came up to be after his last start with him [April 21] and said 'This horse is sick of me, I'm sick of him. Will you take him or find someone to take him?' I had no idea he was 14. I kind of felt sorry for the horse and agreed because he fit the amateur final the following week," said Monaco, who said the purchase price was \$2,000. "I knew I was headed to Maine for the summer and as a 14-year-old I could put him in a \$2,500 or \$3,000 claimer and race him through the fairs and make it back with him before finding him a home when he was done. Making half-a-million I figured he had to have some class in him where I could make my money back. We kind of fell in love with him, so he never saw a claimer."

"Emily didn't want me to bring the horse up here and within the first week she fell in love with him. She said 'he's not going anywhere. He'll go right in my backyard.' She fell in love with him more than I did," continued Monaco.

"We got attached to him quickly because he is your all-around perfect horse. He does nothing wrong in the barn other than the day after he races when he is an absolute handful. He knows that is when he spends the whole day out in the field. He is the perfect riding horse. She jumped on his back within the first day and went a couple of miles with him. It became part of his routine; riding instead of jogging."

Under the care of Monaco, Archetto Hanover earned almost all of his \$19,508 in 2025 earnings. She was in the bike for his final start as a 14-year-old but that might not be the end of the story.

"There is a retirement ceremony in Maine on Saturday [Dec. 20]. We pulled his shoes today [Dec. 16]. We were battling some sickness issues with him late this year. The plan is to turn him out at the house [Monmouth, Maine] for the winter," said Monaco. "There is a very slim chance he'll race because he seems like he's bored after two weeks in the field. Today he went out in the field a little bit and was just running back and forth so Emily went out and rode him for a lap or two around the track. If he tells us he needs a job and wants a job, there is a slight chance he'll race the fairs and amateurs in Maine next year."

The Meadowlands start was number 421 in the career of Archetto Hanover and ranks him second among retirees behind Blue Spanx, who is still fighting the good fight on the track at Northfield in December with 422 races and counting. If Archetto Hanover is done racing it will be with 42 career wins and \$576,699 in earnings. Not a bad career at all.

There is always a 14-year-old that has an interesting story and The Fascinator certainly fits that bill. After all, how many horses stick around for 13 years of racing with career earnings of just \$24,497?

According to an article in TROT Magazine, The Fascinator was somewhat of a therapy horse for retired policeman John Ellsworth to keep on his Nova Scotia-based farm and race.



LISA PHOTO

Marianna Monaco drove Archetto Hanover in his final 14YO start.

"I've been retired from the force for 12 years. I started my career policing Dominion, and after municipalization, I finished with the Cape Breton Regional Police Service," Ellsworth told TROT. "If you want to call her a therapy horse, go right ahead," he added with a chuckle.

While Ellsworth told TROT that she is enjoying retirement, he admitted that there might be a second chapter in her career.

"She's got the body of a 4 or 5-year-old, and she's well-bred, so we might just breed her one day," revealed Ellsworth. "We're going to decide together [as a family]. There's lots of time."

The above are of course just a small sample of the many stories likely connected to the retiring class of 2021. Certainly of note is Barry Black, who led all 14-year-olds in earnings this year with \$60,420, or maybe Liberal, who was purchased as a yearling for \$2,400 and earned over \$400,000.

Each year we wave goodbye to another group of horses which gave their all for a dozen years. For the 106 horses which showed up on the track as 14-year-olds this year and competed in well over 31,000 races, we thank you for your hard work and effort. While it is always sad to say farewell, we honor the memories you've provided and hope that each horse, gelding and mare has a happy retirement where they are well-cared-for.

SEASON'S GREETINGS!

Thank you to the owners, trainers and horses which helped make 2025 another great year.

Wishing everyone a happy & healthy holiday season.

- Yannick, Vicki, Jaiden, Addison and Averi Gingras

Jessica Hallett



Happy Holidays from Caesars Racing

We'd like to wish our racing fans, horsemen and horsewomen, race track teams, and racing community a warm, safe and happy holiday season.



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Greg Reinhart

✉ [@gregreinhart](https://twitter.com/gregreinhart)

Remembering 2025's best moments

the best races of the year.

MAY

We'll start with the Cutler Memorial at the Meadowlands on the 17th where Periculum took on early season standout Antognoni S. Both put in quality efforts, with Antognoni S on the lead before the half and Periculum poised second-over, and it would be Periculum who rallied to win in 1:51 4/5. Eventual division leader Lexus Kody also put in a huge effort from first-up to get second from Antognoni S.

"I don't think he's 100 percent in form, obviously, but he got a nice trip and raced great," winning trainer Marcus Melander said after the race. "When he gets a trip like that, he's very hard to beat. He likes to chase horses down. That's his best ability, to chase them down."

Moving north of the border, this year's Camluck Classic at the Raceway at Western Fair District was held on the 30th. Three horses took a turn on the lead before the half, with Ervin Hanover the last to the point ahead of fellow Dave Menary trainee Brue Hanover. It would be a cavalry charge to the wire among multiple horses, with Brue Hanover slipping up the inside to win by a nose in a photo finish over Ervin Hanover. However, it was determined Brue Hanover had gone inside pylons in the lane, which gave the win back to Ervin Hanover.

JUNE

North America Cup night on the 14th at Woodbine Mohawk Park provided plenty of action as always. A race to mention on the undercard was the Grade 1 Fan Hanover for 3-year-old pacing fillies where Miki And Minnie stormed to the lead from first-over off a fast pace and then held off a charging Rodeo Drive Deo by less than a length in a 1:48 3/5 mile. Then, the Cup itself was a thriller, as Louprint worked hard to get to the front near the 53 1/5 half, kept command in a dazzling 26 second flat third quarter and then outlasted a pylon-skimming Madden Oaks by a head in 1:47 3/5.

"What a dream come true to get the job done. I didn't give him a great trip, but he's a terrific horse," winning driver Wrenn Jr. remarked after the North America Cup. "He raced really well. It wasn't ideal to go that fast in the third quarter, but that's the card I was dealt."

JULY

The Meadowlands played host to the Graduate Series finals for 4-year-olds on July 5 and both races were contentious. In the pace, Sabonis showed a new element of speed off the gate, left out Nijinsky in a middle-half battle and held sway in a 1:47 3/5 mile. Meanwhile, in the trot, Warrawee Michelle came from off-the-pace to get by Private Access and then fought off fellow mare Elista Hanover in a 1:50 2/5 performance.

Sticking at The Big M, this year's Meadowlands Pace program was on the 12th and both of the William R. Haughton Memorials for free-for-allers saw prices come in. Oakwood Ardan IR stormed home in 25 2/5 to get by Coach Stefanos and Sabonis in 1:47 3/5 in one division, while Maximus Miki overcame a shuffle past the half to get up and win in 1:48 in the other. Oakwood Ardan IR was a 32-1 shot while Maximus Miki went off at 14-1.

Later on that night, Elista Hanover went a multiple-move dazzling trip in the Hambletonian Maturity for 4-year-olds, stopping the timer for the mile and an eighth in a stakes record 2:03 off a mile in 1:49 3/5.

"She is so versatile," Elista Hanover's trainer Annie Stoebe said. "Dave (winning driver Dave Miller) can do whatever he needs to, and that was what he needed to do tonight. She wintered down at Spring Station with my friend Sasha and came back strong, bigger and ready for the 4-year-old year. We knew how talented she was and it was worth taking a shot."

Of course the Pace itself ended with a placing for the second time in

While the two MGM Grand Prix Series at Yonkers and the Delaware Standardbred Breeders' Fund events for 3-year-olds at Dover are still ongoing this month, the vast majority of the harness racing stakes schedule is in the archives for 2025. With that said, it's time for the traditional look back at some of



MICHAEL BURNS PHOTO

Louprint (4) defeats Madden Oaks (1) by the narrowest of margins in the 2025 North America Cup at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

recent memory as Prince Hal Hanover crossed the wire first but was deemed to have interfered with Madden Oaks in the lane. That resulted in Madden Oaks being moved up to the win and Prince Hal Hanover demoted to the runner-up spot.

Fresh off his win in the Pace, driver Braxten Boyd came back the next Saturday at Saratoga Casino Hotel to win the Joe Gerrity Jr. Memorial with 43-1 outsider Binge On Yankee. Off a pocket trip behind a battle for the lead between Desperate Man and Spring In His Step A, Binge On Yankee rallied to defeat Desperate Man by a neck in 1:51 1/5.

While he was denied by placing in the Meadowlands Pace, Prince Hal Hanover didn't have to wait long for his signature win as he took the Adios at The Meadows on the 26th. He charged to early command from post eight for Todd McCarthy, yielded to sit behind favored Twisted Destiny, and then came up the passing lane to win in a blanket finish where the top five were separated by just a length and a quarter.

AUGUST



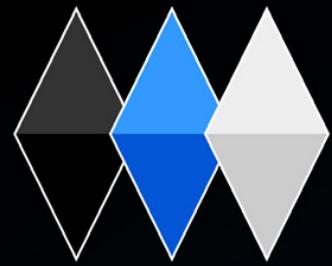
NIKKI SHERMAN/DRF HARNESS

Nordic Catcher dominated the Hambletonian but never started again.

This year's Hambletonian Day card at the Meadowlands was on August 2 and while Nordic Catcher S's win in the Hambo and Conversano's triumph in the Oaks certainly deserve mention, the race of the day was on the undercard in the Cane Pace for 3-year-old male pacers as Captain Optimistic overcame a last-turn shuffle to get around a first-over Madden Oaks and a battling-back pacesetter in Papi's Pistol in a 1:48 1/5 clocking.

"At the three-quarters I wasn't too happy. I was like, 'oh, gosh, here we go again, another bad trip for this poor colt,'" victorious trainer Nancy

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 15](#)



DIAMOND CREEK

2026 STALLIONS

**IN
PREMIER ACRES**

♦ **SABONIS** **NEW**
\$3,500

- OH
SUGAR VALLEY**
- ♦ **DOWNBYTHESEASIDE**
\$17,500
 - ♦ **PEBBLE BEACH**
\$6,000

- WINTERWOOD**
- ♦ **LOUPRINT** **NEW**
\$17,500

- NY
BLUE CHIP**
- ♦ **CANNIBAL**
\$6,000
- WINBAK FARM**
- ♦ **FATHER PATRICK**
\$5,000



- PA
DIAMOND CREEK**
- ♦ **CONFEDERATE**
\$20,000
 - ♦ **SWEET LOU**
\$30,000
 - ♦ **TACTICAL APPROACH**
\$10,000
- KY
DIAMOND CREEK**
- ♦ **ALWAYS B MIKI**
\$7,000
 - ♦ **GIMPANZEE**
\$10,000

Takter said in the winner's circle. "Because he is actually a really nice colt and he deserves to have a classic win. So, I'm happy that he got a Triple Crown win for himself."

A couple days after Hambletonian Day, Grand River Raceway in Ontario hosted their annual Industry Day program, and in the Battle of the Belles for Ontario-sired rookie pacing fillies, Daya made a huge first-over brush to take the lead past a contested half and then opened up to win handily in a 1:50 4/5 eye-opening mile. It was the first significant victory as a sire for Bulldog Hanover, harness racing's all-time fastest horse.

The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono was the site of the next race to mention - the Delmonica Hanover for 3-year-old trotting fillies. Yo Tillie kept her undefeated season going with a hard-fought win as she worked around Delaney Hanover, kept a first-over attack from Conversano at bay in the backstretch and then did the same to Delaney Hanover through the lane, prevailing by three-quarters of a length in 1:51 2/5.

Going back to Canada, Maximus Miki picked up another significant win in the Canadian Pacing Derby on the 30th at Woodbine Mohawk Park as he took advantage of a duel between Ervin Hanover and Bythemissal, and despite going wide before three-quarters, his 26 3/5 final kicker got him by Ervin Hanover at the finish line in a 1:48 1/5 mile.

"He's a big horse and takes time to get into gear," said winning driver Scott Zeron following the victory. "That's why I sent him four-wide early to get his momentum going."

SEPTEMBER

The Jim Ewart Memorial for older male pacers makes frequent appearances on this list, and this year's rendition, which took place on the 6th at Eldorado Scioto Downs, will as well. Captain Albano was able to get to the top from a trailing post 10 past the 26 second opening quarter and then hung out Women Layer through a demanding 52 4/5 and 1:19 4/5 middle-half. Captain Albano couldn't hold on in the lane, though, as Ervin Hanover tracked Women Layer from second-over and then came off the cover to triumph in 1:47 2/5.

Staying in the Midwest, Maximus Miki gets another credit on the list



NIKKI SHERMAN/DRF HARNESS

Yo Tillie won the Delmonica Hanover at Pocono for trainer Andrew Harris (left) and driver Todd McCarthy.

after his dazzling performance in the Harrah's Hoosier Park Pacing Derby on the 19th. Away eighth, he made a breathtaking three-wide brush to the point past the 54 second half-mile station and never relented after that, holding off several pursuers to tally in 1:47 4/5.

"At the quarter-pole we were all a little bunched up there in the middle of the pack or maybe further back than the middle. I found myself three-wide when we turned up the backside with honestly no options but to go forward," Zeron remarked in victory lane. "I trusted that this horse could carry his speed."

"It was a really, really long stretch but honestly he didn't fatigue that bad. To go 26 4/5 in the last turn and still maintain 27 flat, it was a humongous effort. I'm certainly a big fan."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

THANK YOU!

TO EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH MAKING 2025 ANOTHER RECORD YEAR



Wishing everyone a great holiday season and Happy New Year

- Per & Helene Engblom

Hanover Shoe Farms announces its stud fees for 2026:

Captaintreacherous \$30,000

Somebeachsomewhere - Worldly Treasure - Artsplace
p, 3, 1:47.1M (\$3,148,657)

Captain Corey \$15,000

Googoo Gaagaa - Luv U All - Angus Hall
3, 1:51.0F (\$1,090,333)

Greenshoe \$10,000

Father Patrick - Designed To Be - Donato Hanover
3, 1:49.4M (\$1,353,772)

International Moni \$4,000

Love You - Moni Maker - Speedy Crown
2, 1:53.1M, 3, 1:51.4M (\$775,463)

Nuncio \$7,500

Andover Hall - Nicole Isabelle - Lindy Lane
3, 1:50.4M (\$3,645,363)
(frozen semen only)

Papi Rob Hanover \$10,000

Somebeachsomewhere - Panera Hanover - Rocknroll Hanover
p, 3, 1:47.1F (\$927,979)

Sig Sauer \$8,000

Muscle Hill - Sigilwig - Donato Hanover
2, 1:53.3, 3, 1:49.3 (\$1,151,312)

Stay Hungry \$6,000

Somebeachsomewhere - My Little Dragon - Dragon Again
p, 3, 1:47.3M (\$1,303,709)

Super Chapter \$10,000 *NEW*

Chapter Seven - Lifetime Pursuit - Cantab Hall
3, 1:50.0F (\$1,757,359)

Tall Dark Stranger \$5,000

Bettor's Delight - Precocious Beauty - Art Major
p, 3, 1:47.1M (\$1,741,645)

Volume Eight \$6,000

Chapter Seven - Lass A Rope - Encore Encore
2, 1:52.0M (\$434,002)



Season's Greetings

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Beau Jangles, who at this point is a major contender for year-end honors on both sides of the border, really had his coming-out party on the big stage in the Metro final on the 20th at Woodbine Mohawk Park. After moving up on the outside to take charge past a 26 second opening quarter, he withstood attacks from a pair of talented Ron Burke trainees in Al Papi and Frantic Hanover to win by half a length in a 1:49 1/5 performance.

Venturing back to Ohio, the Dayton Trotting Classic on the 27th at Hollywood Gaming Dayton Raceway was among a series of big victories for Lexus Kody, and in this one, he overcame getting shuffled back to last before three-quarters with a wide final-quarter rally that carried him to a 1:51 4/5 victory.

"I was screwed from the word go. I knew I was in a bad spot, just got lucky I was able to squeeze out in the last turn. He's just a tremendous horse and he's so sharp," said Yannick Gingras in the winner's circle. "Obviously it wasn't a good drive, so all the credit goes to him. Now, he's nice to drive; he would never have been able to do all this maneuvering we did tonight. The job they've done with him and then you've got to give credit to the horse, too. He matured, the Burke Brigade did a great job, but I'm so proud of him. He's a top horse."

"He's always had the ability. His gait has never really been the problem. He would trot perfect one week and just gallop the next. It was all mental. I'm just thankful that he got it all figured out."

OCTOBER

The culmination of the Grand Circuit meet at The Red Mile came on the 5th on Kentucky Futurity day. In one of the Tatteralls Pace divisions for 3-year-old males on the undercard, Prince Hal Hanover and Madden Oaks renewed acquaintances, and they battled side-by-side to the half in 52 4/5 and the three-quarters in 1:19 4/5. 86-1 outside Handsome Stranger would take advantage of their tussle, surging from last to first in a 1:48 1/5 victory, as Prince Hal Hanover and Madden Oaks had to settle for third and fourth.

In the Kentucky Futurity itself, Emoticon Legacy overcame post 10 to get to the front past the 53 3/5 half and was able to out-last closing bids by Maryland and Super Chapter to deliver in 1:49 2/5, marking his second straight sub-1:50 triumph.

Woodbine Mohawk Park had the Breeders Crown finals on the 24th and 25th, and while there were several noteworthy races, we'll focus on three of them. In the 2-year-old filly trot, Storybook Love rallied off an inside trip and won in 1:52 2/5 to give driver Todd Ratchford and trainer Matt Bax their initial Crown triumphs, and then in the 2-year-old male pace, Beau Jangles wrapped up an undefeated season with a hard-fought 1:48 3/5 tally where he overcame four horses from the Ron Burke stable and the talented Brandon Blvd.

"I couldn't be happier," winning trainer Dr. Moore said about Beau Jangles. "I mean, what a horse he is. It's just unbelievable to see him do that late in the season. He's just unreal."

"He just impresses me every time I see him, every time I sit behind him. He's just an incredible animal, and we owe him a lot for this year. It's been a tremendous ride for all of us, and we hope to do it again next year, that's for sure."

The next night saw a rare Crown dead-heat as the photo finish camera couldn't separate Miki And Minnie and The Last Martini in the 3-year-old filly pace. It was the second straight Crown success for Miki And Minnie, though she had to share this one with the 68-1 shot.

NOVEMBER

The major stakes season at the Meadowlands wrapped up on the 15th with the Fall Final Fours and FanDuel Championships. In the Valley Victory for 2-year-old male trotters, Spencer Hanover and Diabolic Hill, who were first and second in the Breeders Crown, tangled again, but this time it would be Diabolic Hill who made multiple moves and got the better of Spencer Hanover by a head in 1:53 3/5 over the "good" going.

"He's just phenomenal - the way he fought down the stretch, you can't ask for more from a horse," said trainer Annie Stoebe, who co-owns Diabolic Hill with Mazza Racing Stables. "Him going on the road really helped (with his maturity); he's just a smart boy. It's so rewarding to have an animal that powerful perform like that."

That will conclude the look back at 2025's best races. On behalf of myself and everyone else who covers these races for DRF Harness, I'd like to thank you for following along with us, whether it was on DRF.com/harness or on social media. Best wishes for a happy holidays and a happy new year, and I hope to see you all again for this same piece at the end of 2026.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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PENNSYLVANIA HORSE RACING ASSOCIATION



Early Closing Events

EVENTS CLOSE FEB 15

3 YEAR OLDS

\$800,000 Meadowlands Pace
\$300,000 Stanley Dancer Memorial Colt Trot
\$300,000 Del Miller Memorial Filly Trot
\$200,000 Jerry Silverman Memorial Filly Pace

NEW JERSEY CLASSIC SERIES

\$250,000 Trot Finals for Colt & Fillies
\$25,000 Elims / \$100,000 Consolations
\$150,000 Pace Finals for Colts & Fillies
\$15,000 Elims / \$50,000 Consolations

4 YEAR OLDS

GRADUATE SERIES

\$250,000 Finals
(3) Legs at \$75,000/\$50,000 Divided

OLDER HORSES

\$1,000,000 FANDUEL CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

Stakes below are FanDuel Legs.
See site for complete list.

\$300,000 John Cashman Memorial Trot
\$275,000 WR Haughton Memorial Pace
\$275,000 Sam McKee Memorial Pace
\$175,000 Dorothy Haughton Memorial Mare Pace
\$175,000 Lady Liberty Mare Pace
\$175,000 Arthur Cutler Memorial Trot
\$175,000 Dave Brower Memorial
\$175,000 Crawford Farms Trot
\$150,000 Dr John R Steele Memorial Mare Trot
\$150,000 Perfect Sting Mare Pace
\$150,000 Six Pack Mare Trot
\$150,000 Girl Power Mare Trot
\$100,000 Miss Versatility Mare Trotting Series

EVENTS CLOSE MARCH 15

2 YEAR OLDS

NEW JERSEY CLASSIC SERIES
\$250,000 Trot Finals for Colt & Fillies
\$25,000 Elims / \$100,000 Consolations
\$150,000 Pace Finals for Colts & Fillies
\$15,000 Elims / \$50,000 Consolations

KINDERGARTEN SERIES

\$125,000 Finals guaranteed per division
\$25,000 Legs

FRESHMAN FALL FINAL FOUR

No Eliminations/Top Money Winners Format
\$400,000 Valley Victory 2YO Colt Trot
\$400,000 Goldsmith Maid 2YO Filly Trot
\$400,000 Governor's Cup 2YO Colt Pace
\$400,000 Three Diamonds 2YO Filly Pace

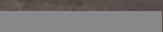
NEW FOR 2026

DUE BY FEBRUARY 15: Any horse by a sire who is listed as eligible MUST make a one-time \$400 Meadowlands EC Participation payment by February 15, 2026 to gain the option of nominating to Meadowlands 2YO Early Closers for the 2026 season and continuing for the life of the horse. View the list of stallions at playmeadowlands.com/stallions



 [VIEW ALL EARLY CLOSING EVENTS](#)

 [VIEW LIST OF ELIGIBLE STALLIONS](#)

For complete information including dates and conditions please visit playmeadowlands.com | 

ALL PURSES ESTIMATED



Nominating 2YOs to Meadowlands 2026 Early Closers

Early Closer Payment Schedule

DATE	AGE	TO DO
Now thru Feb 15	2YO	Review info; prepare submission materials
February 15	2YO	One Time \$400 Early Closer Participation Payment
March 15	2YO	Nomination Payments for Meadowlands 2YO Early Closers Begin



Eligible Stallions for Foals of 2024

NEW FOR 2026

DUE BY FEBRUARY 15: Any horse by a sire who is listed as eligible MUST make a one-time \$400 Meadowlands EC Participation payment by February 15, 2026 to gain the option of nominating to Meadowlands 2YO Early Closers for the 2026 season and continuing for the life of the horse.

Only those 2-year-olds who have made the one-time \$400 Meadowlands EC Participation payment by February 15, 2026 will be permitted to race in the 2-year-old baby races and eligible for nomination to Meadowlands Early Closers in subsequent seasons for the life of the horse.

The entire series of nominating and sustaining payments must then be made for the horse to be eligible to race in the chosen races.

Nomination and sustaining payments on Meadowlands Early Closers for 2YOs will be pushed back to begin on March 15 and adjusted accordingly.

This proposal will be reconsidered for future seasons, and revision is possible.



For complete information including dates and conditions please visit playmeadowlands.com |



Stallions for Foals of 2025

Sires

In appreciation of the efforts made toward this initiative, the Stallion Restriction Condition (Gural rule) will be waived for those stallions nominated to this plan so that their foals of 2025 may be nominated for Meadowlands Stakes & Early Closers for the life of the horse including the 2028 Meadowlands Pace.

Participation in the Meadowlands Early Closing program for foals of 2025 will be contingent upon the sire having been nominated by payment of 50% of the cost of one 2024 breeding by February 15, 2026.

If a stallion is NOT nominated by the February 15, 2026 payment, the 2025 foals of that sire will be ineligible to race in Meadowlands Stakes & Early Closers for the life of the horse.

How To Make Your Stallion Eligible

DATE	AGE	TO DO
Now thru Feb 15	Stallion	Review information; prepare submission materials
February 15	Stallion	50% of cost of one 2024 breeding due



2024 Stallion Fees on Foals of 2025



For complete information including dates and conditions please visit playmeadowlands.com |

At its core the Standardbred industry is most definitely good



HARNESS FOCUS

By Jessica Hallett  [@JHallettPhoto](https://twitter.com/JHallettPhoto)

In a sport defined by split-second decisions and photo finishes, it's easy to forget that the most powerful moments in harness racing aren't always the ones that happen on the track. As we race down to the wire of another year, the harness racing community proved time and time again in 2025 how a sport of individual competitions is truly distinguished by the ability to come together when it counts the most.

From planned events and dedicated races to rallying for the support of other horsemen, this year showed the very best in the harness racing community and why we all love the sport.

Horses are the reason for all of this and doing right by them is the least we can do for all that they do for us, on the track and in the barn. The industry once again demonstrated that fact this year.

Adoption and aftercare efforts were as successful as ever with not only a great number of horses placed in homes after racing, but with the flood of donations to support rehoming efforts saving horses from bad situations.

Horses often show up on the social media timelines asking to be rehomed. There are Facebook groups dedicated to rehoming and retraining standardbreds with members exchanging information, answering questions, and learning about the breed. While most of the posts are horsemen looking for safe landings for their horses following their careers, some of them are horses that have been pulled out of auctions, kill pens, and bad homes. And while most every horseman tries to do right by their horse, unfortunately some horses slip through the cracks and end up in these situations to no fault of the horsemen.

In 2025, I think the example of this that stood out among the rest would be Intrepid Seelster, a millionaire on the track and a producer of offspring that yielded over \$10 million. The son of Camluck retired from his career as a stud and was sold, slipping away from the spotlight and into one of those bad situations. He was found emaciated and in poor conditions, but with the help of Facebook, Kim Hale, Sarah Anthon and others, Intrepid Seelster found the soft landing he deserved. He spent his final months eating lots of food and treats, living out in green pastures with friends of all breeds and sizes, and enjoying life again.

On the other side of the coin, many horses find their careers after racing through adoption programs. Most notably and a personal cause in my case, Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program handles adoptions out of Chenango County at their stunning facility fit for turn outs, comfortable stabling, and retraining. Purple Haze has adopted out over 100 horses. With a solid contract and efficient background check, the horses are sure to go to good homes.

In addition to generous sponsors and donations received year-round, I was honored to play a small part in raising money for such a great organization with the "Young Guns Versus the Veterans Charity Driving Challenge" at Saratoga Casino Hotel on September 14, 2025. The competition featured some of Saratoga's veteran drivers – Wally Hennessey, Jim Devaux, Chris Long, and Mark Beckwith – driving for team Purple Haze/Veterans against some of Saratoga's youngest drivers – Brett Beckwith, Matty Athearn, Mitch Cushing, and Jacob Cutting – who were driving for team Harness Horse Youth Foundation/Young Guns. I was truly shocked at the response to the endeavor, with over \$45,000 raised for the two charities. The sponsorships and donations came in from all around the harness racing industry, from owners to trainers to business owners to breeders and more. People donated in the form of money or items to raffle off and others bid on those auctions to achieve such a successful outcome.

Accompanying Purple Haze with standout years in rehoming was MMXX Standardbreds, who also retrain horses for future careers and show those horses at local shows as well as the National Standardbred Horse Show. Exceptionally, they showed Homicide Hunter [91: 41-8-10; \$1.7 million] among other well-known racehorses.

And finally, on the retraining of standardbreds forefront that stands out for me is the effort put up by Trot Trot Standardbreds Adoption and Retraining Program that not only aimed to rehome and retrain standardbreds



JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

Mark (left) and Brett Beckwith competing on mini horses for charity at Saratoga Raceway.

but gave owners of standardbreds everywhere a chance at the show world through their virtual show program, complete with show ribbons and all.

Besides the event mentioned above, there were numerous charitable fundraising events that took center stage through initiatives like the Breeders Crown Charity Challenge, where drivers, trainers, owners, and

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 23](#)



Happy Holidays

Wishing everyone a safe and joyful holiday season!



Here's to another year of excellence for our sport in 2026.

fans collectively raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for organizations beyond the racetrack.

The Breeders Crown Charity Challenge topped the charts as one of the most inspiring crossovers of sport and community with over \$450,000 raised for Kids Help Phone, Milton District Hospital Foundation, Food4kids Halton, and Peter Munk Cardiac Centre.

Whether the cause supported healthcare, animal welfare, or community outreach, each of these efforts and more demonstrated how harness racing can transform competition into generosity.

Within the confines of the industry, the sense of community resonates even stronger. Harness racing has always been a family atmosphere and that echoes loudly during the toughest moments. When tragedy struck, as in the case of the barn fires out in Indiana or in the sudden passing of horsemen out in Ohio, everyone mobilized instantly.

Donations, auctions, benefit events, messages, and more poured in via every way for each and every cause. Even those who had never met the ones affected stepped up and reflected the true value of horsemanship.

The most powerful movement of the year came in March 2025 when 27-year-old Hunter Myers lost his life in a tragic racing accident at The Meadows. When news hit that Myers did not survive the accident, people showed up in droves with support. Chris Gooden's videos were emotional and telling, shared across the world and sharing Myers' light with others who did not know him. His video of the packed hallways for Myers' donor walk were truly inspiring, for both Myers' donation and for the horsemen that rallied around his family.

The design I drew in tribute to Hunter Myers was asked to be made into a t-shirt. I agreed to sell them with all proceeds going to the family and the post blew up instantly. Over \$35,000 was raised for Myers' fiancée and son through t-shirt sales alone with 3,000 shirts sent all over. Horsemen stepped up to distribute shirts at every track across the United States and Canada. Other horsemen volunteered to ship those shirts by truck and trailer to save on shipping costs. All-in-all, everyone came together in the best way possible in such a tragic situation.

One more key moment that came from that same event was the support of the horsemen with ribbons and decorations. Horses were decorated in green ribbons for Myers' colors. Drivers added decals to their bikes with Myers' name and colors on them. To this day, Ronnie Wren Jr. sports a green band around his arm to show support for Hunter Myers – a green arm band that shined in the North America Cup winners circle as well as the Little Brown Jug and Breeders Crown winner's circles.

Out of the spotlight, not every good deed came with a press release.

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JESSICA HALLETT PHOTO

Driver James MacDonald engages with young fans to help increase the sport's audience.

Many of the most touching moments in 2025 were small acts of kindness – drivers handing out whips and high fives, trainers helping rival stables in the barn and in the paddock, and more.

There are so many to list, so many good deeds that showed the strength of the horsemen and fans. Whether it was cheering in the winner's circle for one another like how the Charlottetown Driving Park paddock, grandstand, and barnyard emptied out for Corey MacPherson's first win in the Gold Cup and Saucer; fist bumps on the track like Braxten Boyd and Ronnie Wren Jr. after their tight finish in the North America Cup; dressing up the horses in colors for designated events like Breast Cancer Awareness or holidays; and more, there was just so much to see this year.

For me, it was every time someone smiled for a photo, agreed to wear the helmet cam, or participated in some silly trend on social media. These little good deeds make big waves on social media for the betterment of the sport, in my opinion. The everyday interactions mean the most.

Together, these stories – supporting the adoption and rehoming of horses, charitable events, coming together in a time of need, and the miscellaneous good deeds in between – culminate in defining harness racing in 2025. Each and every one, mentioned and not, are reminders of the strength in numbers and overall strength of the harness racing community.

Thank You!

TODAY YOU ARE READING THE FINAL DRF HARNESS DIGEST NEWSLETTER ISSUE OF 2025. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THIS ANNUAL "HOLIDAY" EDITION AS WE LOOK BACK AT THE YEAR THAT WAS, AHEAD TO 2026, AND BRING YOU FRESH FEATURES THROUGH THE WORDS OF OUR WRITERS.

I WOULD PERSONALLY LIKE TO THANK OUR WRITING TEAM FOR BRINGING INTERESTING STORIES TO YOU ON A REGULAR BASIS. MUCH APPRECIATION GOES OUT TO THE STANDARDBRED COMMUNITY – DRIVERS, TRAINERS, OWNERS, BREEDERS, MANAGEMENT, HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS AND FANS – FOR THEIR HELP AND COOPERATION IN BRINGING THE CONTENT YOU SEE EACH WEEK TO THESE PAGES. FINALLY, A HUGE THANK YOU TO EVERY ADVERTISER IN THIS ISSUE AND THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED THE NEWSLETTER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. YOUR SUPPORT PLAYS A HUGE PART IN BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE THIS CONTENT FREE TO EVERYONE.

WE'LL BE BACK WITH OUR NEXT ISSUE ON JANUARY 8.

ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE STAFF HERE AT DRF HARNESS, WE WISH EVERYONE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR FILLED WITH WINNERS AND GOOD FORTUNE.

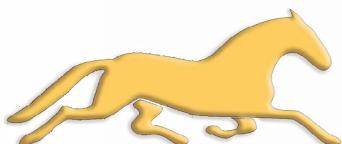
Sincerely,
Derick Giwner



Season's Greetings To All!

THANK YOU

*to the
breeders, consignors,
buyers and staff for another
record-breaking sale in 2025*



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Photos: Triscari Web/Video/Marketing

Prewitt helped Hoosier Park buck the downward handle trend



AT THE TRACK

By Darin Zoccali AtTheTrack7

Over the past decade, one would be hard-pressed to find an individual in harness racing outside of trainers or drivers who have logged more miles than Gabe Prewitt. This past racing season he took his talents to Anderson, Indiana as the new Vice President and General Manager of Harrah's Hoosier Park.

Wherever Prewitt has gone, whether it be The Red Mile, Pompano Park or anywhere else, wagering handle has followed. Hoosier Park in 2025 would be no exception.

With the meet recently concluding, the total handle in 2025 for Hoosier Park checked in at \$131.4 million, which was more than a 30 percent increase from the \$101 million from the previous racing season. The average handle per-race also increased from \$48,322 to \$61,637, an increase of 27.6 percent.

In a year where handle success stories in harness racing were few and far between, it was worth a conversation with Prewitt to hear his insights as to what sparked this handle explosion at Hoosier, especially considering that Prewitt stated that the increase was in retail handle, not computerized wagering. After all, through December 10, wagering handle on harness racing in North America has declined by \$171 million, a decrease of over nine percent compared to the same time period in 2024. When you factor in Hoosier's success, that means the rest of harness racing is down over \$200 million. So perhaps we should all listen to what Prewitt has to say on the subject.

"I came into the role wanting to shake things up," said Prewitt. "I wanted to be a part of a fresh look, I am definitely not from the school of 'this is the way it has always been done.'"

So what changed?

"We changed almost everything. We made a bold maneuver with a post time and moved first post up to 5:30," said Prewitt. That was not a move made just on a whim to see what happens, it was an analytical move.

"We saw handle really dropping off on the back-end of the card. It seemed years ago it was the opposite. When I was at Pompano, those last races late in the evening would typically do very well. But we had to adapt and this was the right move to make," said Prewitt.

The totality of the meet was also a subject we discussed. "We opened earlier and for a couple of months we had fewer horses. We had a rough winter and we were down races and down field size early on. We examined how many nights we could race and the meet stabilized when the 2-year-olds hit the track in May and June," said Prewitt.

Prewitt also cited race placement as an important element to the strategy. "Where should the big fields be on the card? That was an important question and I was actively involved in the draws each day to help our race office maximize our potential. Joe Zambito did a tremendous job hustling for horses and did all the leg work putting together the fields and we worked very well together organizing the program each night," continued Prewitt.

The coordination of post times was also a part Prewitt's strategy.

"There were obvious races we wanted to stay-off. Of course, we don't want to be racing on top of The Meadowlands or Woodbine-Mohawk. Some tracks we actively and directly worked with on post times and others we just watched and managed," said Prewitt.

During our conversation I cited my first year as Director of Racing Operations at The Meadowlands. In similar fashion, we made many changes heading into the 2013 racing season that led to a 32 percent increase in wagering handle compared to the previous year. We made similar adjustments to Prewitt, but I admitted that we may have done too much and been too successful. After year one, we had made so many changes we were challenged with the reality of "now what do you do to keep this momentum going?"

Prewitt spoke to that point.

"I didn't empty the arsenal," said Prewitt. "I feel like we have some more cards up our sleeve. Thankfully, we have a great relationship with both the horsemen and the racing commission and we are all working extremely well together. We have to race 160 days, and we are going to be very strategic in what each of those race days look like."

Prewitt will face a lot of headwinds in 2026. The industry overall is struggling to compete for gambling dollars as evidenced by the steep declines in 2025. It would certainly make Prewitt's job easier if the industry showed overall growth, rather than Hoosier having to buck a national trend.



Handle at Hoosier Park this year was up 30 percent (\$30.4 million) versus 2024.

GABE PREWITT

The Meadowlands, which is the most impactful Standardbred signal, is off just three percent, or \$8 million, which can be attributed to their post time drag experiment. During that time period, which lasted from mid-April to mid-May, handle at The Meadowlands declined \$10.4 million or 32 percent. Thus, outside of the

post-drag experiment, The Meadowlands has seen a slight increase in handle. In 2024 The Meadowlands was just under 15 percent of the total Standardbred market in North America. That number climbed to 16 percent this year because of the declines elsewhere in the industry.

Of the \$171 million handle decline, 15 percent is the loss of Freehold, over 30 percent (\$53 million) of that decline can be attributed to the state of Ohio, which is pretty alarming given the recent success of the breeding market in that state. Another 25 percent (\$43 million) of the decline are Canadian tracks. Therefore, more than half of the Standardbred handle decline belongs to Ohio and Canada, and if you remove Freehold which is closed, Canada and Ohio are 66 percent of the remaining decline. Sure, those are two large jurisdictions, but the largest contributor to handle, The Meadowlands, is only 1.7 percent of the decline.

It's hard to pinpoint for sure what has happened this year with harness racing handle. But Gabe Prewitt seems to have Indiana and Hoosier Park on the right path. Hopefully other racetracks follow suit, examine their wagering menu, and try to make some changes to help the industry grow in 2026.

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BEST COULD BE YET TO COME DURING 2026 RACING SEASON



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman  [BergmanJay](https://www.facebook.com/BergmanJay)

There are many stories we can look forward to in the sport in 2026, but no list can be compiled that doesn't start with the name Beau Jangles. The brilliant, undefeated son of Cattlewash went through a dozen starts – all but one at Woodbine Mohawk Park – and was exhilarating, offering the industry perhaps just a glimpse of what could become the sport's greatest horse of all time.

One start nor one year completes the story and that's why the 2026 season should be more compelling, whether it's going to be a repeat of what 2025 proved or if an entirely different landscape – with traveling and different racetracks – will be a hurdle that shows any weakness in Beau Jangles' arsenal.

For what I saw this year in Beau Jangles there was certainly an aura about the horse, and it was ever-present in the fight he put up when challenged in the homestretch. When other high-quality colts came after him, they always struggled to keep going when they got close to him. Was there a magnetic field that repelled all challengers or just the presence of greatness that equines recognize and willingly play second best to?

It's impossible to tell if there will be any wear and tear on the horse despite the dozen starts and the incredible speed shown at the outset of his career. We all marvel at just how quickly our 2-year-olds come to speed these days, but it was implausible to many that any freshman could make his first start and pace in 1:50 1/5. That Beau Jangles made his last start and captured the Breeders Crown in 1:48 3/5 on a much colder night against a more diverse and substantive field just scratches the surface of what lies ahead.

As with all future predictions it is always safe to look to the past to find clues to what might be ahead. In the case of Beau Jangles the past is in his pedigree and his first year at the track mirrors to some degree much of what was happening in New York in 2000 when a daughter of Precious Bunny named Bunny Lake started to make a name for herself as a freshman. Bunny Lake's daughter Bunny's Legacy is the dam of Mrs Major Hill, the dam of Beau Jangles. So, Beau Jangles' great-great granddam Bunny Lake may be a good horse to use when seeking guidance for his potential as a sophomore.

For some context, Bunny Lake won 8 of her 12 races as a freshman, campaigning mostly in New York but on the Grand Circuit as well. Bunny Lake wasn't perfect for sure, but she did a lot of traveling and raced against the best away from her home turf in her initial year.

What makes Bunny Lake's story interesting, at least when juxtaposed with Beau Jangles, is how she evolved into the 2001 Horse of the Year, winning an astonishing 19 of her 21 starts as a sophomore with her two defeats second-place finishes.

For my purposes, the relation of a former Horse of the Year to another with that potential isn't that alarming. The key element is the evolution of Bunny Lake in her transition from a freshman to sophomore that could be indicative of a family trait the two may in fact share.

With over 20 years removed there have been a major number of changes in the sport's key races and locations and thus 2026 will provide Beau Jangles a canvas that his predecessors didn't have to deal with. With a strong provincial program in Ontario, Beau Jangles' races outside the province may limit just how often he'll need to travel and just how far from home he will have to go. His trainer Dr. Ian Moore has a history of showing up for major contests and I would expect Beau Jangles to be the star attraction wherever he should go.

It's only 10 months away but I have to say how exciting it is to see the 2026 Breeders Crown making a stop at Scioto Downs for the entire 12-race Crown extravaganza. The Buckeye State's revival has been powerful, and a once-forgotten state now consistently produces some of the best horses in North America while housing top stallions on both the pacing and trotting side. The reward of getting to host an event of this magnitude with all the sport's stars descending on Columbus seems guaranteed to draw more interest from local fans as well as bring in large numbers from outside the area. It's going to be a must-see event on October 23-24.

If 2025 showed anything when it comes to predicting just how smoothly a sophomore trotting season would go to and past the Hambletonian, the



NEW IMAGE MEDIA

Beau Jangles is the horse most are looking forward to seeing in 2026.

path towards the sport's premier event is once again going to be fascinating. There were multiple points within the freshman season in 2025 when different horses showed up to win significant stakes events. The rise of Apex – the Mohawk Million champion and Peter Haughton Memorial winner – to the front of the class looked apparent until he was picked off in the Breeders Crown by stablemate Spencer Hanover.

Spencer Hanover had a huge late-season run but still couldn't hold off Diabolic Hill when the two met in the Valley Victory at the end of the campaign.

If anything, the last few months of the year that included Kentucky Championship winner Endurance (second in the Million) and his Bluegrass rival Silverstein showed just how deep this division is.

The Wellwood winner Ardonne was competitive with both Apex and Diabolic Hill in the New Jersey Sire Stakes before his signature victory at Woodbine Mohawk Park. On his game he was every bit as talented as others on this list.

If history is to be our guide there are more than likely dozens of other sophomore trotters with potential to find a path towards the 2026 Hambletonian, some we've never seen race before.

Expect 2026 to be a year where records are shattered.



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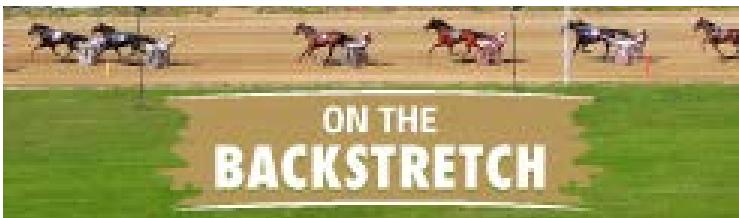


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ON THE BACKSTRETCH

BY DERICK GIWNER

This is a milestone edition of On The Backstretch. Number 300! I'm not sure when I started with a much shorter format back in December 2017 that this column would still be a regular part of the format some eight years later. The frequency has slowed down but there are certainly more personal stories to undercover and hopefully we'll be celebrating the 400th before you know it.

I wanted to find a prominent figure in the industry for this momentous Backstretch edition and Joe Morris was kind enough to step up to the plate. He is the Senior Vice President of Racing for Caesars Entertainment and oversees three harness tracks – Hoosier Park, Scioto Downs and Harrah's Philadelphia.

Born and raised on a farm in Maine and currently living on a farm in Kentucky right next to Keeneland, Morris isn't your typical executive and enjoys spending time with horses, on-track customers and horse people. The 65-year-old took some time out of his schedule to sit down and discuss his journey in the industry, the upcoming Breeders' Crown at Scioto Downs, the possibility of the Hambletonian coming to Hoosier Park, and much more in an interview you won't want to miss. Enjoy, and have a great holiday season and New Year!

CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT VP OF RACING JOE MORRIS

You come from a Maine family that is rich in harness racing tradition. How far back does that go?

The farm, which started as the Norton Farm, is the oldest continually run farm by the same family in the state of Maine. It is my mother's side of the family and it goes back to the 1700s in the Norton line. Mike Graffam has it now. He is a cousin of mine. Nick Graffam, who is his son, and Bethany Graffam still run the farm. It is probably 70 to 80 acres with a half-mile jog track. A group of us grew up there, Bruce Ranger, myself, Mike. We had a breeding operation, a training operation, and got to learn all aspects of the business starting at a young age.

So the farm is still going strong?

They had a heck of a year. Nick finished third in the driver standings at Plainridge. They race the fairs and Cumberland. Mike got his 1,000th training win this year. Bethany got her training license. It is going strong. They are just a good, hard-working family and I'm so proud of them for keeping it going.

Does it race under the Norton banner?

It races now under Team Graffam but it is still the Norton farm. Mike is the grandson of Loring Norton, who is the patriarch of the farm. We've had some really nice horses there over the years. Steady Brave competed in many stakes races and made about a half-million [\$470,209] in the early to mid-1970s. Hurricane Star was a New England Trotter of the Year. We raced from the Maine fairs to The Meadowlands when it opened, Roosevelt, Yonkers.

Growing up on a farm, did you think early on that horses would be your path in life?

I always have been tied to the horses. I did learn at a younger age that I do like air conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter. You don't get either on the backstretch, so I've always had an eye to running a racetrack and I've been fortunate enough to work my whole career in the racing business.



DERICK GIWNER
Joe Morris (right) with Harrah's Hoosier Park VP of Racing Gabe Prewitt.

Eventually you got a degree from the University of Maine in business and finance and went to work at Hinsdale and Foxboro in the New England area. How did that come about?

That involved the Sullivan family. There was a guy named Tom Sheehan there. He had been a longtime racing executive. I stopped into have lunch with Loring Norton one day and he said 'you're out of college now and need a job. Talk to this guy.' He dialed up Tom and he said 'I'll see you tomorrow at Hinsdale for work.' I started there and worked my way through the racing office. I was the assistant clerk of course and program charter. They had Sullivan Brothers printing where I did some accounting work. I ended up at Foxboro which is where I kind of got my MBA. I was General Manager at Foxboro in 1985 and 1986 when I was 25 years old. I was the youngest racetrack GM in the country.

At the National Thoroughbred Racing Association you played a role with getting a number of corporate sponsors into racing. Is that at all possible for harness racing or is the sport too niche?

It is possible. You have to know what you are selling. We have five tracks now and I have sponsorship teams at each of them. We are still out selling sponsorships. We have the Breeders' Crown coming up at Scioto and have already sold the first few for that. Most racetrack people don't have the skillset, but there are certain things – I call it real estate – which you can sell. You can sell your starting gate, your replays, your timer. We all have simulcast shows and you can package 30-second ads in. Each of our tracks with the Caesars group are doing that. I've been selling in this industry for 25 or 26 years now including the NTRA and Breeders' Cup. At our height we were selling \$14 million a year in sponsorships spread out over Thoroughbred, Harness, Quarter Horse and the United States Equestrian Federation. It is still doable but you have to know how to package your stuff up and bring value to whatever partner you are trying to sell to.

You've also worked for BowTie Publishing, Stronach Group and now as Senior VP of Racing for Caesars Entertainment. Do you have a favorite aspect of the business?

Racing. BowTie also published a group of magazines and it was selling ads to horse people. So again, there is the sales and the horse people part of it. I race horses myself. I don't have any Thoroughbreds at this time. I'll probably do it again. I breed and race Standardbreds. I just got a second at Northfield. I like racing people and the racing side of it the best. I like the breeding side but that is a dream. I have a mare that is pregnant to Always B Miki.

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Season's Greetings from Dr. J Stallion Management

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How many Standardbreds do you currently have racing or breeding, etc.?

I have one at Northfield that has two starts, a first and a second. I have a 2-year-old on the farm that will go back to work the week after next. I'm going to jog him the first couple of months myself before I give him to a trainer. I have the pregnant broodmare in foal to Always B Miki. She's had five. I have a couple of retired horses, pasture ornaments I call them. I've got 15 horses right now. Nine of them pay me and six of them don't. I pay them [laughing]. If you are born on the Silver Streak Ranch, which is what I call our little farm, it is a lifelong commitment to you. I pull them out of their mothers, race them – hopefully I outlive them – and they retire on the farm afterwards.

What perspective do you think having grown up on a farm provides you as Senior VP for Caesars?

Always put yourself in the seat of who you are working with. Most track owners and management don't understand the horseman's side of it. Our industry is a true three-legged stool. It takes the track, it takes the horse people and it takes the gamblers. You always have to look at each perspective to try to get there. I sit on the management side of the five tracks we have but in Kentucky I'm on the Kentucky Harness Horse Association Board, so I'm with the horseman there. I ran the Thoroughbred Owners of California for three years. I've got a true horse person's perspective. I clean stalls every week and I wash water buckets every week and I take care of horses every week. Horse care is an eight-days-a-week job. It never ends and it doesn't matter how you feel, you have to take care of your horses. That fact is important and I think it is missed a lot. Sit down and have compassion with your horse people. They are your partners and it is amazing what you can get done that way.

Current or past, what is your favorite track to visit? Why?

Santa Anita. I had the good fortune of running Santa Anita for quite a few years. I did a couple of stints with Stronach and the last one I was the head of Santa Anita. It is such a historic, beautiful property. Racing is at a high level. California might not be going in the right direction right now, but it is storied with history. I'm also very partial to Saratoga. I went to that track for 27 straight years from 1984 to 2010 or 11. Another track that is steeped with history.

What is your favorite big event in racing? Why?

They both start with Breeders. Breeders' Cup and Breeders Crown. There is Christmas, Thanksgiving and Breeders' Cup. Those are my three favorite holidays. It is the best of the best and a heck of a two-day celebration of Thoroughbred racing. Next would be the Breeders Crown. We are trying to get that built back up as an industry with a little more pageantry and fanfare. We have it next year at Scioto and we are really looking forward to that.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of the racing world?

Is there anything outside of the racing world? It's funny, I don't belong to a golf clubhouse. I don't have a boat. I don't have any other bad habits. I spend my money on horses. Here at the farm we have patios set up. We enjoy being here with the horses. Visiting family would certainly be one thing I like outside of the horses but I'm truly a seven-day horse guy, whether it is taking care of them or being around them.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Hopeful. I'm still very hopeful for harness racing. I think we are at a little bit of a crossroads with the sport and I'm hopeful that we can grow it again. Harness racing is down a little over eight percent this year in handle. Hoosier Park was up 30 percent this year in handle. So there still are bright spots. We can still come together better as an industry and grow the sport again.

Speaking of Hoosier, Gabe Prewitt told us in this space that he came there to run it because of you. What does he mean to you and what has he meant to Hoosier since coming on board a year ago?

I've known Gabe for a long time now, probably since 2005, '06, '07 when he was at The Red Mile. This is the third time we've worked together. He came in when new Caesars was formed in 2020 at Pompano and some of the other tracks. Before that he worked at BowTie's with me in publishing. He's a bright, young, talented guy. As far as gambling, he's

the most relevant person in the sport to the gamblers right now. He's just that good. He fits in well on the team. Having been reunited and doing this project with him is just fun. He has high energy, talks to the gamblers better than anybody I've seen, and is very good at setting post times. We learn from each other. I've learned as much from him as he's learned from me. We just enjoy the success of growing our product.



One of the best was a couple of weeks ago when I won a race at Northfield. I've had a couple of decent horses. My best moment in harness racing is just going to the barn in the morning, jogging a horse and cleaning a stall. Even earlier than that it is picking a stallion, breeding a mare, foaling the mare, breaking the baby, racing the baby and winning a race. Having said that, this is the first year I'm not breaking my own yearling. I'm getting up there a little more and this guy is a little headstrong, he's a Pebble Beach, and I decided to send him to Joe Putnam. I'm taking the 2-year-old instead.

Can I ask how old you are?

65. My cousin Bruce Ranger just won the driving championship at Plainridge beating all the young fellows at 66. I have hope for my 66th journey around the sun that I will be able to continue at a high level also.

You oversee three harness tracks – Hoosier, Scioto and Philadelphia – for Caesars. How would you say things are going at each facility?

I'm blessed to have a company I work for in Caesars that is giving us the tools I need to run our tracks. When I say tools, I get to run the team to put around me and they support the programs. When you look at Scioto, we tore down that old grandstand and built a brand new one. We just built a brand new 16-race paddock. We worked with the OHHA to get

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

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the Breeders Crown. We've probably put \$50 million into that property. Hoosier Park, between that and the Horseshoe track, we probably put \$23 or \$24 million into them over six seasons. Harrah's Philadelphia is very similar, updated, clean and well-run. We've got the team and the purse money, and Caesars gives me the tools. It is great when things line up that way.

Hoosier has hosted the Breeders Crown twice since you took over and now you are bringing the event to Scioto in 2026. Can you talk about the significance of that?

You are bringing a world championship event to the state of Ohio. You are bringing the harness racing audience to a new facility with the new grandstand and paddock we've built. We are proud of what we have there and we want to show it off. Our horsemen are great partners and they want to bring this event in also. When it came to Hoosier Indiana-breds won something every year so watch out for the Ohio-breds next year. It is a great story.

What do you think Scioto can bring or add to the Crown experience that other tracks haven't yet?

A five-eighths of a mile track is different. They have been going to bigger tracks but we are a hungry little track. We want to make this the best two nights – four really since we have the eliminations the Friday and Saturday before. We want to showcase the facility, our Ohio-breds and Columbus, Ohio in particular. We are working with groups in the city to showcase our state. I think it will be refreshing to have it at a new place with the excitement that will go with it. Columbus is a real sports city and racing has been there for 64 years now. To bring this event at this level, I think it will produce excitement from top to bottom.

As you know the Hambletonian for 2027 and beyond is open for new bidders. Could Hoosier Park be a potential suitor?

Hoosier Park could be a potential suitor. I believe that event should stay at The Meadowlands and I hope that gets worked out. The Meadowlands is the mecca of the industry and I think that race should stay there. Having said that, if they are not going to take it I think Hoosier Park would be very proud to have it.

If we were going to get in the game for it I'd be looking for at least a three year deal because it is expensive to get and expensive to put that show on that day. I would want it for an extended number of years. But if I step back and put on my industry hat, it really should be at The Meadowlands.

What new things are you doing at your tracks or is there anything you really want to try that the landscape just doesn't permit?

We are always trying to be on the cutting edge. We added drones to our show at Horseshoe and we'll probably try to do one at Hoosier. We've added the racing position numbers that go on the bottom of the screen so the audience can follow the horses better. We've gone all hi-definition for our simulcast. There are some other broadcast things you'll see us trying. We've gone to some AI-assisted wagering things. The geo-position "chiclets" can do timing and we are going to try to utilize that technology. Going back to the early 1980s when I started and all there was were racetracks and no simulcasting, you have to continue

to evolve and reengineer to meet the expectancy and relevance to your audience. We are constantly looking for ways to stay out in front of things.

We have people sitting in our dining room making bets on their phones. That isn't an on-track wager anymore even if they are sitting there. We are trying to come up with better ways to tie in Caesars racebook as one of our tools. There are seven states where Caesars has a shared wallet between sports and racing. We are in 22 states but only seven have the shared wallet. Sports wagers are a way to bring new people into racing. Sports bettors trend young and this is a way we can maybe pull some over. You have to come up with no ideas every month, every week and try them.

If you had the power to change one thing in the sport, what would it be?

HISA is certainly not the way to do it but I would probably work on the integrity of racing. I think we can do a better job in that area. We have cameras at most of our tracks. If you are on the grounds you are under surveillance. We need to work on a level playing field across all of the different stabling options – off site as well as the track.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

I think it is probably going to get smaller with Harness racing and Thoroughbred racing but I think there are enough bright spots out there that we can grow the fan level again. A lot of it will be with television like what we've done for FOX. Caesars has been out in front of that with The Meadowlands; Jeff Gural was one of the firsts. I think we can do better with television. We need to get our product to younger people on the platforms they are using. That isn't standard television anymore. We need to reach people on social media, on ADW platforms, and we need to tie it all together better. We need a grassroots movement to get our base larger. We are not going to get as many people coming to the track as we used to but that doesn't mean we can't get to them on the platforms they consume.

I did studies when I was at Santa Anita and Generation X had a favorable opinion on horse racing but would not mobilize for it. If we put it with a concert or wine festival or beer festival, something like that, they come. You needed the added event to get the people to move.

If you look at our tracks we do that with all of them. We do community events to make sure the community stays a part of the racing. In today's world that also opens the door to employment. We are always looking for employees. There are very few young people trying to get into horse racing right now, so I take every opportunity I can to talk to them.

Time for the stretch drive...

Best Horse you ever saw: Bret Hanover on the harness side. My oldest son is Brett and he might've struck me as a favored horse. Cigar on the Thoroughbred side. He didn't set a track record but coming down the stretch if you locked onto his eye you weren't going to pass him. That's the intangible in horse racing.

Favorite TV Show: Right now I'm watching Boston Blue. I liked Blue Bloods and Boston is my favorite city. I also watch 60 Minutes because I'm a news junkie.

Trotters or Pacers: I would love to say trotters but I race pacers.

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Bartlett seeks two more stakes wins at Yonkers to close out 2025

By Ken Weingartner

Fresh off being named Driver of the Year earlier this week by the U.S. Harness Writers Association, Jason Bartlett will aim to add two more big wins to his list of accomplishments when he gets behind Sir Pinocchio and Coaches Corner in their respective \$250,000 MGM Grand Prix Series finals on Friday afternoon at MGM Yonkers Raceway.

Bartlett, who was named Driver of the Year for the first time in his career, leads all drivers in North America in purses, with \$16.4 million, and is No. 2 in victories, with 798. He is only the second driver ever to win more than \$15 million in purses and more than 700 races in the same season, joining Tim Tetrick (who has done it five times).

A 44-year-old native of Maine who now resides in upstate New York, Bartlett has already captured a dozen races this year with purses of \$250,000 or more, including the first two Breeders Crowns of his career. In addition, he is winning races at a 31-percent clip and wrapping up his 14th dash title at Yonkers Raceway.

"When you win something like this, you kind of look back and remember where you came from – from where I started to being named Driver of the Year," Bartlett said. "It's kind of surreal; coming from Maine and moving down here and working my way up the ranks at Yonkers, and now nationally.

"Everybody has dreams, but I never imagined me winning that award. Nor have I been an awards type of guy, to be honest. I've always stayed close to home, comfortable. Yonkers had such a great schedule that I really didn't need to go anywhere. I was making a great living and got to be home every night with my family. What more could you ask for? Now that my kids have gotten a little bit older, and I'm not coaching anymore, which really plays a big part in it, I followed the stakes horses a lot more than before. I hit the right horses, too. I got some nice horses in their divisions and followed them all around the New York Sire Stakes (and won four of eight NYSS finals). And a lot of the New York horses did really, really well on the national stage."

Bartlett plans to take some time off following Friday's card at Yonkers, where he will drive 8-5 morning-line favorite Sir Pinocchio in the MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series final one race before getting behind 3-1 morning-line choice Coaches Corner in the MGM Grand Prix Pacing Series final. Both events will be raced at the distance of 1-1/4 miles around Yonkers' half-mile oval.

Sir Pinocchio, a 4-year-old gelding trained by Ed Hart, won each of his three MGM Grand Prix preliminaries. For the season, the son of Met's Hall-Lady Cromwell has won eight of 19 starts and earned \$247,605. He has won seven of his past nine races dating back to August.

"The 4-year-old year can be a tough year for these horses, going up to the major leagues," Bartlett said about Sir Pinocchio, who last year won the MGM Yonkers Trot at Yonkers and has earned \$936,934 in his career. "He's gone with the best horses. In a lot of the big races, he's been right there with them, but in the stretch I had to hold on to him and keep him together. That was something that never happened last year. So, we tinkered with him, and now the last month he's been really good in the homestretch. Eddie has done a great job."

"He's just been such a great horse. He's so handy. For a trotter, it is amazing how fast he is out of the gate. That puts him in the right spots most of the time. He's been really good throughout this series. I expect him to race really well on Friday. Win or lose, he's finished off this year really well."

Coaches Corner heads to his final after two wins and a second in his preliminaries. For the season, the 5-year-old son of Always A Virgin-Caribbean Pacetray has hit the board in 18 of 26 races, winning seven and earning \$573,095. The Per Engblom trainee was second in the Breeders Crown Open Pace and third in the FanDuel Open Pace Championship.

Lifetime, Coaches Corner has 34 victories and \$1.36 million in purses.

"He's a model of consistency," Bartlett said. "He might not be the most talented, he might not be the fastest, but you can always count on him to show up every single time. He kind of flies under the radar. You never see the headline where he wins the big one, but he's always right there, always involved. We never thought he was this type of horse last year, and he just kept proving us wrong. I love the horse."

Coaches Corner will start from post nine in the second tier on Friday in a field of 10.

"He didn't draw good, which seems to be the theme for him this year. We have to hope we get ourselves in the best spot possible leaving the

gate. I think the mile-and-a-quarter really suits his style. He's a real strong horse, so I think the extra distance will help him."

Racing begins at 2:15 p.m. (EST) Friday at MGM Yonkers Raceway, with the Grand Prix finals carded as races seven and eight.

\$250,000 MGM GRAND PRIX TROTTING SERIES FINAL - RACE 7

Head #	Post-Horse	Driver	Trainer	Morning Line
2-1	Ari Ferrari J	Jim Marohn Jr.	Tony Alagna	12-1
1-2	Antognoni S	Yannick Gingras	Ron Burke	2-1
3-3	Sir Pinocchio	Jason Bartlett	Ed Hart	8-5
4-4	Blackhawk Zette	Brent Holland	Robert Baggitt Jr.	20-1
5-5	Ultion Face S	Tyler Buter	Per Engblom	20-1
6-6	Asteroid	Colin Kelly	Enrico Robinson	10-1
7-7	Southwind Coors	George Brennan	Ron Burke	20-1
1A-8	Cecil Hanover	Brett Beckwith	Per Engblom	2-1
8-9	Take All Comers	Todd McCarthy	Jim Campbell	5-1
9-10	Dribbling Bi	Daniel Dube	Ron Coyne Jr.	6-1

\$250,000 MGM GRAND PRIX PACING SERIES FINAL - RACE 8

Post-Horse	Driver	Trainer	Morning Line
1-Catalpa Rescue A	Matt Kakaley	Scott Blackler	12-1
2-Redwood Hanover	Yannick Gingras	Per Engblom	9-2
3-Soho Firestone A	George Brennan	Doug Dillon Jr.	5-1
4-Captain Albano	Todd McCarthy	Noel Daley	7-2
5-Calicojack Hanover	Daniel Dube	Luc Blais	20-1
6-Spring Inhis Step A	Brett Beckwith	Enrico Robinson	15-1
7-Mossdale Ben N	Jim Marohn Jr.	Peter Tritton	20-1
8-Huntinthelastdolar	Tyler Buter	Per Engblom	8-1
9-Coaches Corner	Jason Bartlett	Per Engblom	3-1
10-Always A Thrill	Colin Kelly	Nick Devita	20-1

\$10K GTD PICK 4, \$20K PICK 5 FRIDAY AT YONKERS; EARLY 2:15 POST

Bettors will have a chance at some pre-holiday cash on Friday (December 19) at MGM Yonkers Raceway, as in conjunction with the Standardbred Owners Association of New York, the early Pick 4 that starts in race one will have a \$10,000 guaranteed pool and the Pick 5 pool in race five will be guaranteed at \$20,000. Since the 2025 meet ends on Friday, the Pick 5 also has a mandatory payout.

In addition to the finals, Friday's on-track action includes a \$100,000 MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series consolation, which is the fourth event on the program and a \$100,000 MGM Grand Prix Pacing Series consolation, which will go as race six.

Part of Friday's program, including the two series finals, will be nationally-televised during Fox Sports 2's America's Day at the Races broadcast.

Joseph Tosies named 2025 Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year

The United States Harness Writers Association is proud to announce that Joseph "Jo Jo" Tosies has been named the 2025 Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year.

Tosies will receive the award, which is annually sponsored by Art Zubrod and Leah Cheverie's Fair Island Farm in conjunction with USHWA, at the Dan Patch Awards Banquet, presented by Caesars Entertainment, which will be held at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, FL on Sunday, February 22.

In addition to transportation costs to Orlando, Tosies will also receive two complimentary dinner tickets, a two-night stay at Rosen Shingle Creek, as well as a cash prize of \$2,500.

Upon learning he was chosen as this year's recipient of this award, Tosies said: "I can't believe I won this award, it's so special and the highest honor any caretaker could possibly get. I'm so proud of my horses and to be honored for doing what I love is beyond anything I could imagine."

READ MORE

RACE OF THE WEEK

YONKERS FRI

1 1/4 Mile Trot MGM GRAND PRIX TROTTING SERIES FINAL. Purse \$250,000

\$1 PICK 3 (7-8-9) | \$2 EXACTA | \$2 TRIPLE | \$10 SUPERFECTA

1 PP2	ANTOGNONI S(L)	br g 5, by Father Patrick, Bouncing Bax by Credit Winner Burke Rqc Stb Frdrcktn,PA:Weaver Bruscemi,Cnrsbr,PA:Fac Rqc,Scrsl,NY,Y Gingras,Ahntwn,NJ	Last 5 Sts-\$91,750	1:51.2 Wbs 7/8 None in U.S.A.	25 * 14 10 2 1 24 YR 0 0 0 0 23 YR 0 0 0 0	\$256,430 25 Tot -24 Tot 12 3 1 3 -Life 43 21 5 6	\$356,537 \$43,343 \$417,861
2-1 Y.	Gingras 982-171-149-119 (180)	R. Burke 610-105-94-66-(172)	Br.- Burke Racing Stable LLC,ON, CA				
12 Dec25	6YR	fst109° 274 :57:3 1:262 1:542 MGM GP L3	50000 2 11 ¹ 11 ² 11 ² 11 ² 11 ² 11 ²	YaGingras RoBurke 274 294 284 28 1:542 92	-5 5w	L-18 Antognoni TkeAlCmrs Asteroid	Led won handily-7
5 Dec25	2YR	fst109° 282 :57:1 1:254 1:54 MGM GP L2	50000 2 11 ² 12 ¹ 12 ¹ 14 18 110	YaGingras RoBurke 282 284 283 281 1:54 94	-3 7w	L-11 Antognoni DribingBi AmigoVolo	Ld,wr,handy-7
21 Nov25	5YR	fst149° 28 :57:1 1:254 1:53 MGM GP L1	50000 1 21 ¹ 21 ¹ 21 ¹ 21 ¹ 21 ¹ 2hd	YaGingras RoBurke 281 291 283 273 1:53 94	+1 5w	L-42 StPrincho Antognoni UltiFace	Pkt,ang,in,trot-7
23 Oct25	8YR	fst53° 274 :57:2 1:254 1:534 Inv	39000 7 33 ⁴ 33 ³ 23 ³ 24 13 13	JaBarltt RoBurke 282 293 28 274 1:534 97	-1 5w	L-33 AntognoniDribingBiAsteroid	1st up,ld,lane,handy-8
16 Oct25	8YR	fst109° 28 :58 1:27 1:554 Inv	39000 7 44 ² 44 ² 21 ² 22 21 ¹ 11	YaGingras RoBurke 284 30 283 282 1:54 87	-1 6w	L-188 Ferretti Antognoni DribingBi	Tuck,1st up,even-8
2 Oct25	4YR	fst61° 272 :56:2 1:254 1:541 Inv	39000 5 11 ¹ 11 ² 13 32 ¹	TyButer RoBurke 272 28 292 284 1:54 91	+7 4w	260 StPrinchoFerrettiAntognoni	Usd,pt,14,1rd,ln-5
1A PP8	CECIL HANOVER(L)	b g 5, by Chapter Seven, Columbia by Muscle Massive Fac Racing LLC,Scarsdale,NY,Yannick & Jaiden Gingras,Allentown,NJ	Last 5 Sts-\$42,500	1:52.3 Pcd 5/8 1:54.4 YR	25 YR 9 3 2 1 6 3 2 1 23 * 2 1 0 0	\$74,750 25 Tot 15 5 4 2 \$102,880 24 Tot 8 3 2 1 *\$41,250 Life 44 14 9 10	\$119,560 \$12,280 \$615,745
2-1 B.	Beckwith 193-7-2-(158)	P. Engblom 1150-268-176-152,(233)	Br.- Hanover Shoe Farms Inc,PA				
12 Dec25	7YR	fst109° 282 :58 1:261 1:55 MGM GP L3	50000 4 21 ¹ 21 ² 21 ² 21 ³ 2nk	YaGingras PeEngblom 283 299 281 283 1:55 87	-5 5w	L-17 DribingBi CecilHrv HotFishKm	Ld,yld,ang,in,trot-6
5 Dec25	4YR	fst109° 272 :56:1 1:244 1:543 MGM GP L2	50000 2 21 ¹ 21 ² 22 33 ⁴ 64	YaGingras PeEngblom 273 284 284 301 1:55 82	-3 7w	L-26 StPrincho Antognoni UltiFace	Ld,pt,ld,no bid-7
21 Nov25	7YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:551 MGM GP L1	50000 6 21 ¹ 22 ¹ 21 ¹ 31	YaGingras PeEngblom 281 294 281 29 1:55 86	+1 5w	L-1339 Anterferi Asteroid CecilHrv	Pkt,room,all,sty-7
5 Nov25	11Dtr	fst56° 28 :57:3 1:261 1:534 Opn Hcp	28000 5 21 ¹ 11 ⁴ 11 11 ² 13	JerSmith PeEngblom 281 292 283 273 1:534 90	-6	L-1.60 CecilHrv OhLookMgc DrinkUpDr	Ld,ang,in,gamely-8
27 Oct25	10Cbr	fst66° 271 :56:3 1:251 1:552 Opn	40000 7 4 ³ 11 ² 11 11 21	YaGingras PeEngblom 274 284 283 302 1:55 83	-8	L-469 OhLookMgc CecilHrv DaquirHrv	Ld,ang,in,gamely-8
20 Oct25	9Cbr	fst61° 263 :56:2 1:258 1:534 Opn	40000 8 5 ⁶ 57 ³ 4 ² 21 ² 31 ² 21	DeDunn PeEngblom 284 286 283 302 1:534	-8	L-34 StPrinchoFerrettiAntognoni	Usd,pt,14,1rd,ln-5
2 PP1	ARI FERRARI J(L)	b h 5, by Walner, Dream Child by Muscle Hill Kenneth E Jacobs,Baldwinsville,NY	Last 5 Sts-\$27,500	1:50.1 M1 1:52.2 OaG 5/8	25 YR 8 2 0 0 7 4 2 0 23 YR 2 0 0 2	\$48,350 25 Tot 14 1 1 1 1 \$231,500 24 Tot 15 7 2 1 1 \$40,800 Life 59 14 16 5	\$111,631 \$325,250 \$1,227,062
12-1 J.	Morahn Jr. 1053-82-125-138 (078)	T. Alagna 16-2-1-0-(125)	Br.- M Biasuzzi Stable Inc,FL				
12 Dec25	6YR	fst109° 274 :57:3 1:262 1:542 MGM GP L3	50000 4 5 ⁴ 57 ¹ 5 ⁵ 5 ⁷ 58 ¹	JaBarltt ToAlagna 29 30 282 283 1:56 83	-5 5w	L-65 AntgnoniTkeAlCmrsAstrid	Sat,2w,pt,3/4,no bid-7
5 Dec25	2YR	fst109° 272 :57:1 1:254 1:54 MGM GP L2	50000 7 X7 ¹⁰ 71 ¹ 70 ¹ 71 ²	JaBarltt ToAlagna 30 ² 29 ² 283 1:56 82	-3 7w	L-57 AntognoniDribingBiAmigoVolo	Speed,1st,turn,brk-7
21 Nov25	7YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:551 MGM GP L1	50000 4 11 ¹ 12 ¹ 11 ¹ 11 ¹ 1hd	JaBarltt ToAlagna 28 293 292 291 1:55 86	+1 5w	L-35 Anterferi Asteroid CecilHrv	Ld,wr,safely-7
8 Nov25	2M1	fst64° 274 :55:1 1:244 1:522 Qua	2 21 ² 21 ¹ 21 ⁴ 21 ² 1hd	JaBarltt ToAlagna 28 29 27 ² 1:52	-13w	L-39 DribingBi Asteroid DireStrts	Pkt,ang,in,gamely-4
30 Oct25	8YR	fst61° 28 :57:2 1:253 1:541 Inv	39000 6x 6ds 6ds 6ds 6ds	JoStrattn ToAlagna 29 ¹ 200 63	+0 5w	L-11 Anterferi Bstmdflv Aardyth	Bk past,stab-6
9 Oct25	2M1	fst55° 29 :57:2 1:254 1:541 Qua	2 11 ¹ 11 ² 14 ³ 16 17 ¹	JaBarltt ToAlagna 29 282 282 281 1:54	-8	L-16 Anterferi Bstmdflv Aardyth	Ld,wr,handly-5
3 PP3	#SIR PINOCCHIO(L)	br g 4, by Met's Hall, Lady Cromwell by Chapter Seven Carolyn Atherton,Scarsdale,NY	Last 5 Sts-\$94,500	1:51.3 M1 1:51.4 Pcd 5/8	25 * 9 7 0 0 0 24 * 4 4 0 0 0 23 YR 0 0 0 0 0	\$168,500 25 Tot 19 8 2 1 \$327,007 24 * 17 11 4 0 0 -\$164,902 23 YR 41 21 7 1 1	\$247,605 \$36,934 \$36,934
8-5 J.	Bartlett 1640-569-238-230 (347)	E. Hart 66-16-5-9-(242)	Br.- Carolyn Atherton,NY				
12 Dec25	4YR	fst109° 28 :57:3 1:261 1:543 MGM GP L3	50000 6 11 ⁴ 11 ² 11 ² 12 ¹ 12 ¹	JaBarltt EdHart 28 299 283 282 1:54 91	-5 5w	L-05 StPrincho StCoors BlackhwkZ	Led,won,handly-6
5 Dec25	9YR	fst109° 274 :57:1 1:253 1:541 MGM GP L2	50000 3 11 ¹ 11 ² 12 ¹ 12 ¹ 1hd	JaBarltt EdHart 274 292 282 283 1:54 93	-3 7w	L-81 StPrincho UltiFace KhasnRoad	Ld,wr,handly-8
21 Nov25	5YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:551 MGM GP L1	50000 2 11 ¹ 11 ² 11 ¹ 11 ¹ 1hd	JaBarltt EdHart 28 291 283 274 1:53 90	+1 5w	L-21 StPrincho Antognoni UltiFace	Ld,drug,in,gamely-7
14 Nov25	3YR	fst44° 284 :58:1 1:271 1:561 Qua	5 12 ³ 11 ² 11 ¹ 12 ¹ 13 ¹	JoStrattn EdHart 284 292 29 29 1:56 ¹ 90	-13w	L-16 StPrincho BlsMfrc FaceFadewHrv	Tuck,2nd,dr,brk,br-8
16 Oct25	8YR	fst51° 28 :58 1:27 1:554 Inv	39000 8 5 ⁶ 56 ² 53 ³ 3X ² x8 ¹¹	JaBarltt EdHart 291 30 282 302 1:58 73	-1 6w	L-20 Ferretti Antognoni DribingBi	Ld,dr,room,saferly-5
2 Oct25	4YR	fst61° 272 :56:2 1:254 1:541 Inv	39000 4 21 ¹ 21 ² 21 ³ 31	JaBarltt EdHart 273 29 292 281 1:54 91	+7 4w	L-36 StPrincho Ferretti Antognoni	Yld,room,saferly-5
4 PP4	BLACKHAWK ZETTE(L)	b h 4, by Cantab Hall, Zette Starlet by Credit Winner J.L.Schlossky LLC,Bonita Springs,FL	Last 5 Sts-\$15,260	1:55.1 YR 1:53.3 Pcd 5/8	25 YR 7 4 3 5 24 YR 0 0 0 0 23 YR 0 0 0 0	\$93,620 25 Tot 17 4 3 6 \$264,879 24 Tot 17 5 1 5 \$31,879 23 YR 45 9 8 9	\$106,900 \$264,879 \$31,879
20-1 B.	Holland 1665-230-266-242 (143)	R. Baggett 51-17-12-9,(137)	Br.- Cozette M Mc Avoy,PA				
12 Dec25	4YR	fst109° 28 :57:3 1:261 1:543 MGM GP L3	50000 3 14 ⁴ 45 40 ³ 44 ¹ 34 ⁴	BrHolland RoBggtrJr 29 299 281 283 1:55 86	-5 5w	L-73.50 StPrinchoStCrsBlckhwkZ	Sat,2w,pt,3/4,no bid-6
5 Dec25	4YR	fst109° 272 :56:1 1:244 1:543 MGM GP L2	50000 3 11 ² 11 ¹ 12 ¹ 12 ¹ 1hd	BrHolland RoBggtrJr 29 283 281 292 1:55 87	-3 7w	L-50.98 StPrinchoAntognoni UltiFace	Pkt,book,cr,sty-7
21 Nov25	7YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:551 MGM GP L1	50000 2 14 ⁵ 45 ² 42 ³ 31 ² 43 ⁴	BrHolland RoBggtrJr 29 293 292 28 1:55 86	+1 5w	L-52.99 Anterferi Asteroid CecilHrv	1st,up,slid,even,ln-7
13 Nov25	8YR	fst43° 28 :57:3 1:27 1:562 NW20291L5	23000 1 1hd 1hd 1hd 1hd	JoStrattn RoBggtrJr 289 293 292 294 1:56 80	-13w	L-38 GoldnHain MnAm BlckhwkZ	Ld,batd,foes,trd,ln-8
6 Nov25	8YR	fst43° 271 :57:1 1:261 1:551 Inv	35000 1 23 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ²	JoStrattn RoBggtrJr 289 301 28 283 1:56 83	+0 5w	L-10.94 MissPstSmthAntroMnAm	Trail,dr,dr,brk,br-8
30 Oct25	10YR	fst61° 274 :57:1 1:25 1:533 nw30000L5	30000 1 11 ² 11 ¹ 11 ¹ 13 ² 11 ¹	JoStrattn RoBggtrJr 274 291 28 283 1:53 97	+0 5w	L-75 StPrinchoUltiFaceKegStand	Ld,game,vtkn,lnr,dr-5
23 Oct25	11Pn	fst61° 273 :57:2 1:253 1:533 nw15178L5	21000 2 11 ³ 11 ² 11 ¹ 12 11 11	JoStrattn RoBggtrJr 273 292 283 294 1:52 87	+2 5w	L-60 BlackhwkZ NoDrpmsBlkTbsh	Ld,wr,safely-8
5 PP5	ULTION FACE S(L)	b g 9, by Joke Face, Croix D'am by Love You Engblom Stable LLC,Wrightstown,NJ,Jesus Boni Arvenberg,Hammar,SD	Last 5 Sts-\$44,750	1:52.1 Ph1 5/8 None in U.S.A.	25 YR 5 0 3 1 24 YR 0 0 0 0 23 YR 0 0 0 0	\$34,750 25 Tot 14 4 5 2 \$0 0 0 0 -\$16,900 24 Tot 17 4 5 2 \$0 0 0 0	\$56,125 \$15,310 \$399,998
20-1 T.	Buter 720-91-78-105 (126)	P. Engblom 1150-268-176-152,(233)	Br.- Lutfi Koljgini & Anna Svensson,SD				
12 Dec25	6YR	fst109° 274 :57:3 1:262 1:542 MGM GP L3	50000 6 6 ⁹ 6 ¹⁰ 6 ⁷ 78 ⁴ 68 ³	MaKakaley PeEngblom 292 301 281 282 1:56 82	-5 5w	L-36.98 AntognoniTkeAlCmrsAstrid	2nd,ov,bad,cr,no bid-7
5 Dec25	9YR	fst109° 274 :57:1 1:253 1:541 MGM GP L2	50000 2 21 ¹ 21 ² 22 2 ² 2 ¹	YaGingras PeEngblom 28 292 283 283 1:54 89	-3 7w	L-12.91 StPrinchoUltiFaceKhasnRoad	Pkt,br,cr,dr,sty-8
21 Nov25	5YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:533 MGM GP L1	50000 2 3 ⁴ 3 ² 3 ³ 3 ³ 3 ³	YaGingras PeEngblom 283 291 283 28 1:54 90	+1 5w	L-10.53 StPrincho Antognoni UltiFace	Role,dr,even,ln-7
6 Nov25	3YR	fst43° 271 :57:1 1:261 1:551 Inv	35000 2 4 ³ 4 ² 4 ¹ 4 ³ 3 ⁴	JaCulphr PeEngblom 271 30 29 283 1:55 90	+1 2w	L-1.37 StCoorsUltiFaceAsteroid	Ld,dr,dr,br,ln-7
30 Oct25	10YR	fst61° 28 :57:2 1:253 1:541 Inv	39000 3 21 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ²	JaCulphr PeEngblom 271 291 28 283 1:54 88	+0 5w	L-75 StCoorsUltiFaceKegStand	Ld,game,vtkn,lnr-5
7 Oct25	11Pn	fst61° 274 :57:2 1:254 1:543 Inv	30000 8 8 ¹¹ 8 ¹¹ 8 ¹⁰ 7 ³ 3 ¹	JaCulphr PeEngblom 302 284 272 273 1:51 85	+1 7w	L-17.02 AntognoniDribingBiAsteroid	Trd,dr,dr,br,ln-8
6 PP6	ASTEROID(L)	br g 7, by Creatine, Ultimate Cameron by Yankee Glide Pollock Racing LLC,Veneta,PA	Last 5 Sts-\$44,250	1:52.1 Ph1 5/8 1:51.4 Ph1 5/8	25 YR 9 2 4 3 24 YR 0 0 0 0 23 YR 0 0 0 0	\$83,930 25 Tot 17 5 3 5 \$0 0 0 0 -\$14,763 24 Tot 16 3 2 3	\$111,430 \$10,123 \$70,063
10-1 Co.	Kelly 874-103-131-131 (119)	E. Robinson 12-3-4-1,(250)	Br - Diamond Creek Farm LLC,PA				
12 Dec25	6YR	fst109° 274 :57:3 1:262 1:542 MGM GP L3	50000 3 3 ⁴ 3 ³ 3 ² 3 ¹ 3 ²	CoKelly EnRobinsn 282 294 284 28 1:55 87	-5 5w	L-36.60 Antognoni TkeAlCmrs Asteroid	3hole,even,lane-7
5 Dec25	4YR	fst109° 272 :56:1 1:244 1:543 MGM GP L2	50000 4 3 ² 3 ³ 3 ² 3 ² 3 ²	CoKelly EnRobinsn 28 284 282 292 1:54 91	-3 7w	L-58 StPrinchoAsteroidStCoors	Sat,2w,cr,dr-8
21 Nov25	7YR	fst149° 28 :57:3 1:26 1:551 MGM GP L1	50000 1 3 ¹ 3 ⁴ 3 ⁴ 3 ³ 3 ²	CoKelly JeCulphr 283 294 281 283 1:55 86	+1 5w	L-10.72 Anterferi Asteroid CecilHrv	Pkt,dr,aut,dr-7
6 Nov25	3YR	fst43° 271 :57:1 1:261 1:551 Inv	35000 2 4 ³ 4 ² 4 ¹ 4 ³ 3 ⁴	CoKelly JeCulphr 274 30 29 283 1:56 85	+1 2w	L-30.78 StCoorsUltiFaceAsteroid	Sat,traf,lnr,trot-5
30 Oct25	8YR	fst43° 271 :57:2 1:253 1:541 Inv	39000 3 21 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ² 21 ²	CoKelly JeCulphr 281 292 281 29 1:54 88	+0 5w	L-17.07 DribingBiAsteroid DireStrts	Ld,dr,dr,br,2nd-6
23 Oct25	8YR	fst53° 274 :57:2 1:254 1:534 Inv	39000 5 11<sup				

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USHWA announces 2025 Dan Patch human award winners

WEAVER-BRUSCEMI/BURKE TOP BREEDERS; OTHER AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Weaver-Bruscemi/Burke – the amalgam of Weaver-Bruscemi LLC (Mark Weaver and Mike Bruscemi) and Burke Racing Stable LLC (Weaver-Bruscemi along with the Burke family matriarch Sylvia) – did well in Dan Patch Awards announced earlier in the week by the United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA), and now they have established a breeding operation, largely of former racehorse stars, which has risen enough to be honored with Dan Patch Breeders Awards.

Weaver-Bruscemi/Burke itself bred the winners of \$6,555,777 in 2025, ranking fifth among all breeders with only 74 starters – quite a rapid growth – and as usual, often combining with partners such as Phil Collura, Lawrence Karr, and J&T Silva- Purnel & Libby, they appear on the breeding records of such stars as Louprint, Loua Dipa, Al Papi, Looksgoodinloulou, and Melillo. This racetrack success earned Weaver-Bruscemi/Burke the Dan Patch Breeder of the Year Award.

Three of the five horses mentioned above have the word “Lou” in their name, which gives a fairly good indication why Sweet Lou was voted Pacing Sire of the Year in 2025, after dead-heating with Bettor’s Delight for the honor last year and winning outright at his gait in the inaugural 2023 awards. A son of Yankee Cruiser out of Sweet Future bred by Birnam Wood Farms, Sweet Lou was purchased by Burke/Weaver-Bruscemi, Collura, and Karr, was a champion racehorse earning nearly \$3.5 million, and now is under the stewardship of the Sweet Lou Syndicate. Sweet Lou is a “dual-hemisphere” stallion, standing “Stateside” at Diamond Creek Farm in Pennsylvania and also going to New Zealand for duty at Woodlands Stud.

In 2025 at press time Sweet Lou led all stallions on the all-age money winning list with almost \$18.4 million. He was also second on the 2YO list and fourth in the 3YO rankings. Louprint and Loua Dipa, as mentioned, are offspring of his who are favored to win their division’s Dan Patch Awards (to be announced Sunday at approximately noon on the Harrah’s Philadelphia simulcast, with releases e-mailed out right afterward.)

Chapter Seven also repeated his 2024 Trotting Sire of the Year success. A son of Wind-song’s Legacy - La Riviera Lindy bred by Richard Banca, he was originally purchased by Gary Cocco and Richard Gutnick, who joined with Southwind Farms and J&T Silva Stables as owners until he was syndicated for stud under Chapter Seven Syndicate. He now stands at Blue Chip Farms.

For the second straight year Chapter Seven posted a “clean sweep” of the major money titles for trotting sires, with his all-age earnings at \$14.2 million tops and also leading the 2YO (\$4.5M) and 3YO (\$6.6M) ranks. His sophomore Super Chapter won \$1,236,099 and the Yonkers Trot, Beal, and Empire Breeders Classic, and his 2YO Spencer Hanover was successful in both his Breeders Crown elimination and Championship.

The Pacing Broodmare of the Year, Looksgoodinaromper, is another success for the Burke/Weaver-Bruscemi crew. A daughter of Pet Rock – Don’t Blame Me bred by Robert and Barbara Bongiorno, B/W-B acquired her early in her two-year-old season and for them won her \$300,000 Ohio Sire Stakes Championship that year.

2025 saw two female offspring of Looksgoodinaromper perform strongly to help her earn the title: divisional championship contender Loua Dipa (\$827,028) and Kentucky program Champion Looksgoodinloulou (\$381,262 – ’25).

The Trotting Broodmare of the Year, Mission Brief, is a daughter of Muscle Hill – Southwind Serena. She was bred by Steve Stewart, Black Creek Farm, and Andrea Lea Racing Stables Inc., and was purchased before her broodmare career by Mission Brief Syndicate, of which Stewart is corresponding officer. In her racing career, Mission Brief showed tremendous speed and courage while earning \$1,599,587 (And yes, she was campaigned by the Burke Brigade in her two years of racing).

In 2025 Mission Brief gave us Apex (Walner), a highly-regarded freshman colt who earned \$871,798, won the Mohawk Million, and is the early line favorite for his own Dan Patch Award. Two other stakes winners out

of Mission Brief were Kadena (who sold for \$1.2 million last month) and Vic Zelensky.

BOYD, RALLIS, HENNESSEY, LILLIE BROWN DAN PATCH AWARD WINNERS

Two of harness racing’s most dynamic young achievers, driver Braxten Boyd and communicator John Rallis, have been selected to receive Dan Patch Awards in voting by the United States Harness Writers Association, who is also recognizing two of the sport’s “favorite” people of a slightly more-seasoned vintage: driver Wally Hennessey and horse sale hospitality manager Lillie Brown.

Braxten Boyd, 25, has been selected for the Rising Star Award, which features a developing horseman aged 30 or under. Braxten entered the sport in his native Michigan, in the path of his father Brett, an accomplished horseman and one of the most influential people in the state’s harness-related politics, but he has quickly carved his own bright way. In 2025 Boyd will have his best earnings year ever and is neck-and-neck for \$5 million in money-winning, and at press time he was four wins short of his previous year’s lifetime best of 337 victories in a year.

Boyd has been the leading driver at Tioga Downs the last two years, and at his base track of Pocono he was fifth in the standings – no mean feat when the four veterans above him have a combined 29,587 lifetime trips to Victory Lane. But Boyd achieved this year’s award largely on the strength of his recent ability to step up his game and race well in the very best stakes company, as in 2025 with the sophomore pacer Madden Oaks, who was placed first in the \$656,000 Meadowlands Pace and who was a desperate head behind sophomore leader Louprint in the \$740,000 North America Cup. He also drove Black Gold to victory in a 2024 Indiana Super Final, with the horse paying \$260.20 for a \$2 win ticket.

Covering Boyd and Madden Oaks in both of this year’s showcase events and many other top races throughout North America was 30-year-old John Rallis, the winner of the Breakthrough Award, the front-side equivalent of the Rising Star. A harness fan since a youth, Rallis provides pre- and post-race analysis for Woodbine Mohawk Park regularly, along with notable coverage for The Meadowlands, The Red Mile, Scioto, the USTA and Daily Racing Form, and he is associate editor

for TROT magazine.

From early on the well-traveled Rallis put in a large amount of hours doing all the analysis and background study he could in preparation for a broadcast, especially watching replays. He combines sharp handicapping, informed and engaging storytelling, and incisive interviewing to give his watchers the most information they can have to inform their own forming of opinions about the racing.

Like Proximity Award winner Bill O’Donnell, Wally Hennessey, the winner of the Good Guy Award, is a native of Maritime Canada, and like O’Donnell he first made his U.S. mark at Saratoga Harness. Hennessey has won many titles at both the central New York track and at Pompano Park, late of Florida, and he stands tenth on the all-time list of winning drivers with 12,103 victories, while winning 21.3% of his starts and not having a year-end UDR below .300 in 24 years.

As would benefit a Good Guy Award winner, though, it is Hennessey’s gracious, easy pleasantness, and willingness to cooperate for the good of racing and its fans, that has made him a standout favorite among patrons and horsemen alike – as his nominating biography said, “There is a never a time when visiting Wally Hennessey that he does not have a smile on his face and a cheerful hello to greet you.” When Steven Tyler of the rock group Aerosmith once visited Pompano, it was Hennessey who was there with a horse, a sulky – and a smile.

Always greeting people with a smile and warm friendliness is Lillie Brown, who worked in the publicity Office at The Meadowlands before joining up with Preferred Equine Marketing, which was the perfect setting for the talents that would help her win USHWA’s Unsung Hero Award.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 39](#)

She was called the “heart and soul” of the Preferred Equine’s sales office at all of the major sales, providing every manner of services to customers and potential customers who needed assistance. She always did so in a winning manner and with a natural style of conversation with those from all walks of the racing life. “An army runs on its stomach,” it is said, and Lillie showed her talents in this area as well, helping the “troops” at a sale keep going through exhausting hours with her excellent skills as a barista. Now retired from the sales office but still in hospitality at the sales, Lillie Brown is the only one of the 2025 USHWA award winners to have a voter put an exclamation point behind her name to show how much she is valued – in fact, her name showed up as Lillie Brown! twice!

BURKE, BARTLETT, WEAVER-BRUSCEMI TOP TRAINER, DRIVER, OWNERS

The “Burke Brigade” had major contenders in many of the racehorse divisional battles this year, and trainer Ron Burke set an all-time one-year record of \$31 million for conditioners. They will all be honored by the United States Harness Writers Association’s in the year-end Dan Patch awards voting – Burke as trainer, and the partnership of Weaver-Bruscemi LLC (Mark Weaver and Mike Bruscemi) and Burke Racing Stable LLC (Weaver-Bruscemi LLC in combination of Burke family matriarch Sylvia) as Owners of the Year.

Jason Bartlett, having posted career highs in several major categories and the #1 sulkysmith in terms of earnings with \$16.3 million in 2025, was voted the Driver of the Year in the polling.

Burke/Weaver-Bruscemi won its fourth Owner award: the combine was voted tops in 2013 and 2018, and they then repeated last year’s success with another triumph this year. “B/W-B” was the individual leader in the owners’ earnings derby, their horses having earned nearly \$5.7 million and

headed by two-year-old pacing filly Loua Dipa, who is the favorite to be crowned champion of her division in this coming Sunday’s announcement of the leading racehorses (to be simulcast live on the Harrah’s Philadelphia signal live at approximately noon, with the press releases to follow at the end of the show). The Brigade’s overnight warriors contributed the bulk of that money, with thirteen horses six-figure earners during the campaign.

Burke/Weaver-Bruscemi has always been noted for introducing partners to the top Grand Circuit levels of harness racing, and indeed three of the four top money earners including partnerships behind them are frequently in the owners’ ranks teaming with a B/WB

Mike Bruscemi (foreground) and Mark Weaver are part of the Dan Patch Owner of the Year winning team.

horse: Knox Services Inc., Phillip Collura, and Lawrence Karr. Louprint and Lexus Kody, giants on the racetrack scene in 2025 and favorites in the Dan Patch divisional battles, are included in the partnerships.

Ron Burke is the “general” who keeps the operation running with the Brigade’s several “battalions” at racetracks, plus their “Grand Circuit” battalion, with incredible breadth of oversight and knowledge of his farflung empire. He is also winning his fourth award in the training category: he had been the writers’ choice in 2011, 2013, and 2018 as well, and his father Mickey Sr. won the award in 2006.

Again, the raceway horses often dominate at their own particular venues: nearing press time late in the season, Burke was the leading trainer at Dayton, The Meadowlands, The Meadows (his home base) and Pocono Downs, and was in the top five at four others.

The “Grand Circuit battalion” of the Burke Brigade was truly a “Murderer’s Row” of talent. It includes two 2025 millionaires: Lexus Kody, top money winning horse overall at \$1,371,651, and Louprint (\$1,025,971), along with a pair of \$750,000-plus winners, Loua Dipa and Sippinonsearoc. As noted, some of these stars will almost certainly grab additional glory with the further announcements of the Dan Patch Awards winners.

Jason Bartlett grew up in the harness game, with his family in Maine, won USHWA’s Rising Star Award in 2008, and has settled in the very top leagues of harness racing, with a long string of driving titles at Yonkers Raceway, the track with the biggest purses in North America.

Bartlett progressed his career to the next level in 2025: going “out on the road” more and driving several stakes competitors, Bartlett saw the



DERICK GIWNER

Dan Patch racehorse winners to be announced Sunday at Harrah's Philly

The winners of the Dan Patch Awards for the best in their 12 racing divisions (2YO, 3YO, and older; trot and pace; male and female) will be broadcast at approximately noon this Sunday via the simulcast signal from Harrah’s Philadelphia, before that track’s 12:40 PM (ET) card starts that day. The winners are determined by the voting of the United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA), in conjunction with members of American Harness Racing Secretaries (AHSR).

This program will be co-hosted by Heather Vitale and Jenna Otten.

Press releases with the winners and more detail about their exploits during the 2025 racing season will be distributed to the sport’s major media outlets for publication immediately after the end of the videotape announcements.

The video will also be made available on the U.S. Trotting Association’s YouTube channel (youtube.com/ustrotting) starting at 1 p.m. that day.

These horses will be honored at USHWA’s annual Dan Patch Awards Banquet, to be held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando FL. The identities of the Pacer of the Year, Trotter of the Year, and Harness Horse of the Year will be announced for the first time at the Banquet; Sunday’s broadcast will identify the best in each division.

-edited release (U.S. Harness Writers Association)

horses he drove earn \$16.3 million to lead all North American drivers. He is also second in the dash standings (at his current pace he’ll go over the 800 mark), and his UDR of .454 also ranks number two among all North American competitors. It takes a special horseman to win the UDR titles at Yonkers Raceway and The Meadowlands, but Bartlett did it and was crowned in this category at Pocono as well.

Bartlett won the first two Breeders Crowns of his career this season with Spencer Hanover and French Wine, and he was the regular driver of Dandy Ideal, who raced in the sport’s “glamour division” (three-year-old pacing males) and earned over \$900,000 in doing so. Bartlett posted at least three victories in the New York Sire Stakes Championships, the Big Apple Stakes, and the Matron Stakes. Jason has ascended to the top echelon of drivers to the degree that in 2025 he won seventy races with purses of \$100,000 or more.

O'DONNELL SELECTED AS BERGSTEIN PROXIMITY AWARD WINNER

William (Bill) O’Donnell, who had one of the greatest careers a driver has ever had, and since retiring from the sulky has stayed a major influence as president of the Central Ontario Standardbred Alliance (COSA), has been voted the highest honor decided solely by members of the United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA), the Stan Bergstein – Proximity Award.

The trotter Proximity retired as the richest-ever Standardbred a couple of years before an award was named for her in 1952. Bergstein, the only “double Hall of Famer” and himself a Proximity winner in 1976, had his name added to the top award after his passing in 2011.

Bill O’Donnell, like a disproportionate number of harness immortals, is a native of Maritime Canada, working his way down to Foxboro and Saratoga. He then set his sights on the sport’s flagship track, The Meadowlands, and Bill and John Campbell soon became synonymous with excellence in Jersey and on the Grand Circuit, much as an earlier pair of “Golddust Twins” – Stanley Dancer and Billy Haughton – shone in their day.

READ MORE

The award winners listed above will be recognized at the 2026 Dan Patch Awards Banquet, presented by Caesars Entertainment, which will honor the best of the best of harness racing, both human and equine. The Banquet will be held on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, Florida. Sponsorship information for the Banquet can be obtained from Shawn Wiles at swiles@rwcatsskills.com; advertising in the souvenir Journal can be arranged through Kim Rinker at trotlink@aol.com; tickets through Judy Davis-Wilson, zoe8874@aol.com; for room reservations, click on this [hotel link](#). More information about the Banquet and associated USHWA meetings that weekend will soon be available at www.usharnesswriters.com.

-pages 38 & 39 contain edited releases from U.S. Harness Writers Association



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Trainer Ed Hart to call it a career

By Derick Giwner

When Sir Pinocchio goes behind the gate in the seventh race on Friday (Dec. 19) at Yonkers Raceway it will mark the final start in the storied career of trainer Ed Hart. After more than 50 years in the sport as a trainer and at one time driver, the soon to be 70-year-old is stepping away from the sport he loves.

"I have mixed feelings but I just think it is time. It's just not the same. I used to have a lot of horses and a lot of people working. I have grandkids now who don't live far away and my wife and I want to travel and move around a little," relayed Hart about his decision and reasoning.

Hart said he was down to about eight horses the last couple of years and he is in the process of dismantling the remainder of his barn. The one he owns will go up for auction while some others, like standout stakes winner Sir Pinocchio, will move on to new trainers.

"He will be turned out for about six weeks and be trained by Linda Toscano," said Hart about Sir Pinocchio's future before touching on the possibility of ending his training career on a winning note this Friday. "I hope so. That would be awesome. What a way to go."

"He's never quite liked that distance but he's been really good this fall and his last couple of starts."

"Anything can happen in those big races, especially at a mile and a quarter. I'm real hopeful," continued Hart. "All I know is that I have the best driver in the country right now and my horse is good."

Sir Pinocchio is the 8-5 morning line favorite with Jason Bartlett driving in the \$250,000 MGM Grand Prix Trotting Series final at Yonkers. His main competition in the 10-horse field is expected to be multiple-leg winner Antognoni (2-1, Yannick Gingras). Post time is approximately 5:00 PM (ET).

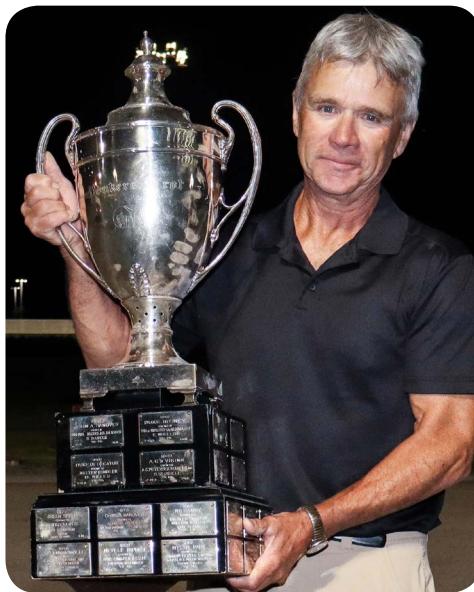
Dating back to 1991 when the United States Trotting Association started keeping training records, Hart has amassed 1,135 victories and just over \$24 million in stable earnings from 7,385 starts (as of Dec. 16). The New York native also drove 231 winners from 1978 to 2006 in limited starts.

In addition to the 2011 Meadowlands Pace with eventual Dan Patch 3-year-old colt pacing winner Roll With Joe, Hart reminisced about some of his favorite past champions and winning moments.

"Between 2000 and 2010 I had some pretty good horses. Space Shuttle winning the U.S. Pacing Championship in 1:47 [1:47 4/5] on Hambletonian Day [2000, Meadowlands] was unbelievable. That was before they were going those miles. I had Four Starzzz Shark for the Four Starzzz Stable and won the Haughton Memorial [2002, Meadowlands]. Village Jolt was 2-year-old [pacing colt] of the year and won the Woodrow Wilson [2004, Meadowlands]. There was also Pirouette Hanover. I had a lot of good horses back then," said Hart, who felt his decision would've remained the same even if his stable was bigger and loaded with talent. "Probably, I think I would [retire]. I think Sir Pinocchio can have a really good 5-year-old year, but for me right now is the time to let go."

Hart admitted that he will miss the sport and that he would continue to follow it. As to his future, he plans to stay active.

"I'm going to try to keep busy. I'm not going to sit home at the kitchen table. I like to ski and work out. I'll make myself busy," said Hart. "I had a good career. My wife has been super. A lot of good people have worked for me over the years and I've had a lot of good horses. I'm happy."



Ed Hart raised the Yonkers Trot trophy in 2024 after Sir Pinocchio won the classic.

MIKE LIZZI PHOTO



HANDICAPPER'S CORNER

At DRF Harness we strive to provide the best handicapping information in the sport. Each week we'll use this space to bring you some of our handicappers' best bets and value plays. Use this information as one of your tools when wagering or head to your nearest ADW and simply make a win bet.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

RACE 6

(6) RIDER HANOVER was used to make the front in his Big M debut and I'm not sure you can fault him for coming up second best. He'll certainly benefit from the mile and should have a big chance at upsetting (4) BIG EGO.

-Derick Giwner



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19

RACE 11

(2) MY GIRL FRIDAY has the post edge on the filly that she just beat last week. She will look to remain unbeaten in her short career.

-Kevin Plowcha



RACE 12

(4) JETT STAR N ships back to Yonkers for the Cushing outfit and faces softer than he's accustomed to. Veteran has four local wins this season with a live chance for another.

-Matt Rose



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

RACE 10

(8) CHRISTOPHER DANCE N is back from Yonkers off three straight victories over there and prevailed a couple of times at the Meadowlands in August and September as well. This will be a good test against Open company, but I think he's capable.

-Greg Reinhart



FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

Friday Saturday

Meadowlands Analysis

Thursday Friday Saturday

Yonkers Analysis

Thursday Friday

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNESS

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

CHINDANO JR.'S GRAND SLAM INCLUDES 1,000TH CAREER VICTORY

When Joe Chindano Jr. won the seventh race at Batavia Downs with Mr. Cool Seacyre N (2:04, \$3.00) on Wednesday (Dec. 17) night, he registered his 1,000th career driving victory on a statement night that saw him win a total of four races.

[READ MORE](#)

MEADOWLANDS AMATEUR DRIVING CLUB RAISES OVER \$70K IN 2025

The Meadowlands Amateur Driving Club is making an impact this holiday season with its end-of-season charity donations.

"This year, the MADC donated over \$70,000 in driver commissions to multiple charities. They range from horse retirement facilities to local food pantries and foundations for disease research that have affected families of MADC members, like the Multiple Sclerosis foundation and the Alzheimer's foundation," said Club President Joe Lee, emphasizing the inclusive nature of the club's charitable efforts.

"The MADC is proud to be a regular part of the Meadowlands program and takes great pride in helping both local and national charities this time of year. We can only do that because of the generosity of the Meadowlands and the public who backs us week in and week out. Because of the level of support we receive, we can pay it forward and look forward to continuing to do so in the future."

The charities with donation amounts are:

- \$7,500 Standardbred Retirement Foundation, Inc
- \$7,500 New Vocation Racehorse Adoption Program
- \$7,500 Purple Haze Standardbred Adoption Program Inc
- \$5,000 Racing for Home Inc.
- \$5,000 13 Hands Equine Rescue Inc.
- \$5,000 MMXX Standardbreds Inc
- \$5,000 Sunshine Horses Inc
- \$5,000 Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame
- \$2,000 Toys for Tots
- \$2,000 Human Needs Food Pantry Inc
- \$2,000 Meadowlands Area Young Men's Christian Association
- \$2,000 Wounded Warriors
- \$2,000 World Central Kitchen Incorporated
- \$2,000 Ronald McDonald House of Central & Northern NJ
- \$2,000 Liberty Haven Farm Inc
- \$2,000 Alzheimer's Charity (TBD)
- \$2,000 Lucky Orphans Horse Rescue
- \$2,000 St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Inc
- \$1,650 Fisher House Foundation Inc.
- \$1,500 National Multiple Sclerosis Society

"We are very appreciative of the MADC. The club is a staple on our weekend cards, helping provide full fields, which in turn leads to strong wagering numbers," stated Jason Settemoir, Meadowlands COO/GM.

"The Club's donations are certainly going to help make a difference in our community."

The Meadowlands Amateur Driving Club's board, which includes Jason Settemoir, Scott Warren, Alex Figueras, David Glasser, Jeff Gural (Chairman), Jim Slendorn (Vice President), and Joe Lee (President), determined the selected charities.

Remaining 2025 Promos at the Meadowlands Racetrack

The much-anticipated 2026 calendar giveaway takes place on Saturday, December 20th. The first 500 guests, beginning at 6 pm, receive a commemorative desk calendar featuring images of the sport's greatest horses and drivers in action from the 2025 racing season.

On Saturday, December 27th, the track closes out the year with Fan Appreciation Night. Guests can enjoy \$1 hot dogs, popcorn, pretzels, soda, and \$2 Bud and Bud Light from 6-11 pm available at the Cafe.

Reminder: the Meadowlands Racetrack's FanDuel Sportsbook is the number one sportsbook in North America and the place to catch all sports action, including both the NFL and college football playoffs.

Racing, event, and dining details available at [here](#).

[-release \(Meadowlands\)](#)

ROSECROFT ANNOUNCES 2026 WINTER-SPRING MEET DATES

Following Thursday's (Dec. 18) program at Rosecroft Raceway, the Capital Region harness racing venue will go dark for a month-long holiday interval before commencing its winter-spring 2026 meeting on Monday, Jan. 19, 2026.

The 34-day stand will again feature live harness racing on Monday and Thursday evenings through and including April 30, followed by four programs in May: Saturday, May 2 (Kentucky Derby Day); Thursdays, May 7 and 14; and Saturday, May 16 (Preakness Day). Post time on Mondays and Thursdays remains unchanged at 7:15 p.m.; Saturday post time is to be determined.

Rosecroft remains open daily for simulcast wagering on Thoroughbred and Standardbred racing across North America, but will be closed on Christmas Day (Dec. 25).

Mandatory payout Hi-5

Rosecroft Raceway will offer a mandatory payout on Thursday's (Dec. 18) Jackpot Hi-5, which has seen its carryover grow to \$5,967.91.

The Hi-5, a 50-cent base wager that requires players to select the first five finishers in order, is offered nightly in race 10. With Thursday being the final program of the fall meet, the carryover will be paid out in full and split among all holders of winning tickets.

For more information, including free past performance pages, the Players' Guide tip sheet, and live and archived video, visit [www.rosecroft.com](#).

[-edited releases \(Rosecroft Raceway\)](#)

OHHA NAMES WINNER OF 2026 STALLION DIRECTORY PHOTO CONTEST

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association congratulates Emily Burkholder, of Apple Creek, Ohio, for her photo of a Summa Cum Laude-FaithnFlowers foal that will be used on the cover of the 2026 Ohio Standardbred Stallion Directory & OHHA Member Directory.

Burkholder's photo was selected from 35 entries. She will receive a \$250 gift card for her winning picture.

Other photos entered into the contest will be used throughout the directory.

OHHA members can expect to receive their directory in January.

[-release \(OHHA\)](#)

DELAWARE STANDARDBRED FINALS AT DOVER

Bobby's Grace leads Copeland-trained exacta in Wednesday's final

Bobby's Grace launched a three-wide bid into the far turn to narrowly edge Git Goin in the final yards of the \$110,000 Delaware Standardbred Breeders' Fund (DSBF) series championship for 3-year-old pacing fillies on Wednesday (Dec. 17) at Bally's Dover, lowering her lifetime mark to 1:54 4/5 and giving trainer Vince Copeland a sweep of the exacta in the event.

[READ MORE](#)

Yale atop the 3YO male trotting class on Tuesday

Stung early in a four-way battle for the early lead, Yale had enough left late to shrug off two challenges en route to a lifetime-best 1:56 2/5 win in the \$110,000 Delaware Standardbred Breeders' Fund (DSBF) series championship for 3-year-old male trotters on Tuesday (Dec. 16) at Bally's Dover.

[READ MORE](#)

Take It Easy upends Kat's Fancy in Monday's 3YO Filly Final

Following a pair of second-place finishes to Kat's Fancy in preliminary action, Take It Easy took full advantage of a pocket trip and lifted late to get the last word in the final yards of the \$110,000 Delaware Standardbred Breeders' Fund (DSBF) series championship for 3-year-old trotting fillies on Monday (Dec. 15) at Bally's Dover.

[READ MORE](#)